MISSION CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL GOSPEL IN LANGA: A SOCIO-POLITICAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY, ca.1927-1960

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to contribute to the socio-political and cultural history of Langa during the years ca.1927-1960 by exploring the critical religious influences, perceptions and ideologies that deeply shaped the longitudinal development of the local black township of Cape Town, South Africa. It is the contention of the thesis that religious factors and considerations were of fundamental significance to the marked processes of historical change that Langa underwent during this period, from being one of the most peaceful, cohesive and "politically backward" urban African communities since its official opening in 1927, to becoming a place of militancy, violence and social polarisation by the time of the March 1960 uprisings against apartheid.

In particular, the thesis seeks to trace the formative role of a combination of conservative and liberal modes of mission Christianity. Often loosely described as the "Social Gospel", this powerfully shaped the historical development and character of Langa – both positively and negatively, constructively and divisively, subtly and overtly – during a period of increasingly harsh and oppressive segregationist legislation in South Africa. It is argued that the variety of Christian forms of religious consciousness and ideological perceptions operated in a range of contradictory ways to effect historical patterns of social legitimation and solidarity on the one hand, and processes of liberation and dislocation on the other. Especially during the late 1920s, 1930s and early 1940s, it is claimed that the more conventional forms of a predominantly mission Christianity functioned to define a strikingly conservative, integrated and petty bourgeois-orientated township. The strength and influence of the "respectable" churches, the staunch, churchgoing petty bourgeoisie and their respective Christian-based cultural, educational and civic organisations, proved crucial in this regard in collusion with the municipal and township authorities. At the same time, it is held that the progressive strands of the Social Gospel, in particular, contributed towards the early shaping of an important dissenting tradition of protest in the township. In addition, the diverse influences of Social Christianity served to reinforce structural trends of class, religious and cultural differentiation and provoked more radical, even militant and antithetical, socio-religious and political responses. Amongst semi-urbanised, rural and migrant working-class elements in Langa, in particular, such processes had become especially evident by the late 1940s and into the 1950s.

In this work, each chapter is geared historically towards examining these contradictory functions of the combination of conservative and progressive forms of Christianity, according to particular domains of social activity – the spheres of institutional religion, education and culture, and politics, respectively. Thus, in a parallel fashion, the chapters address the themes of the Social Gospel's pervasive rise, mediation and consequent decline, together with the related questions of social integration, class differentiation and political liberation, towards assessing the historical role of religion in each distinctive social sphere in relation to the fundamental transition in Langa.

The study concludes that Langa's socio-political and cultural history can be more effectively interpreted on the basis of this critical assessment of the Social Gospel's ambiguous impact during the inter-war and early apartheid years. Such an approach allows for conceptual constructs such as petty bourgeois identity, social group divisions, ideological expression and social change to be more fully explored. As such, this local study seeks to make a contribution to the growing body of scholarship that recognises the vital historical role of religion, particularly Christianity, in the shaping of South African communities in the twentieth century.

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ABBREVIATIONS

(Phonetically-pronounced abbreviations are not capitalised)

AAC	All African Convention
AB	Advisory Board
AEBC	African Ethiopian Baptist Church
AME	African Methodist Episcopal
ANC	African National Congress
ANMC	African Native Mission Church
AUCDWC	African United Cultural and Domestic Workers' Club
AUNBC	African United National Baptist Church
AWC	Western Cape Administration Board (Administrasieraad Wes-Kaapland)
AWGT	African Western Grand Temple
BE	Bantu Education
BEA	Bantu Education Act
BED	Bantu Education Department
BMC	Bantu Methodist Church
BPC	Bantu Presbyterian Church
BSC	Battlers' Social Club
CAC	Cape African Congress
CATA	Cape African Teachers' Association
CATU	Cape African Teachers' Union
CC	(Cape Town) City Council
CED	Cape Education Department
CLP	Coloured Labour Preference
COD	(South African) Congress of Democrats
CP	Communist Party (of South Africa)
CPASC	Cape Peninsula African Social Club
CPBCCA	Cape Peninsula Bantu Community Centre Association
CPCC	Cape Peninsula Church Council
CPIDAMASA	Cape Peninsula Interdenominational African Ministers' Association
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa
CP of SA	Church of the Province of South Africa
CPWS	Cape Peninsula Welfare Society
CU	Congregational Union
CWA	Congregational Women's Association
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
EC of SA	Ethiopian Church of South Africa
Fedsaw	Federation of South African Women
Focus	Fellowship of Cultural Understanding
GG	Governor-General
GMC	General Missionary Conference
IDAMASA	Interdenominational African Ministers' Association
IOTT	Independent Order of True Templars
JC	(Cape Peninsula) Joint Council (of Europeans and Bantu)
LAB	Langa Advisory Board
LACSA	Langa African Cultural and Social Association

LP	Liberal Party
LPA	Langa Parents' Association
LVA	Langa Vigilance Association
MA	Ministers' Association
MC	Methodist Church
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
MMA	Mfengu Memorial Association
MMO	Moshesh Memorial Organisation
MMS	Mendi Memorial Service
MRA	Moral Rearmament Association
NAB	Ndabeni Advisory Board
NAC	Native Affairs Committee
NAD	Native Affairs Department
NCWSA	National Council of Women of South Africa
NEUM	Non-European Unity Movement
NEUF	Non-European United Front
NLL	National Liberation League
NMO	Ntsikana Memorial Organisation
NP	National Party
NVA	Ndabeni Vigilance Association
PAC	Pan-Africanist Congress
PASA	Peninsula African Socialite Association
PASC	Peninsula African Social Club
PC	Presbyterian Church
PEM	Paris Evangelical Mission
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SAL	South African Library
SANNC	South African Native National Congress
SAP	South African Police
SATA	South African Temperance Alliance
Soya	Sons (later Society) of Young Africa
SSK	Synodical Sending Kommissie
TLSA	Teachers' League of South Africa
TSMM	Tiyo Soga Memorial Mission
UCT	University of Cape Town
ULBT	Usizo Lwa Bantu Temple
UNIA	Universal Negro Improvement Association
UP	United Party
VA	Vigilance Association
VC	Vigilance Committee
WCTU	Women's Christian Temperance Union
WPJVA	Western Province Joint Vigilance Association

GLOSSARY

abantu basesikolweni	"school" people
amagoduka	migrants (in general – both "school" and "red" types)
amagqoboka	"school" migrants
amakosi	traditional chiefs
amaqaba	"red" migrants
amatopi	the respectable, urbanised, middle-aged to elderly social group – usually running small businesses, though less well educated than the *ooscuse-me*
amatopikazi	wives of the *amatopi*
cultus	devotional
iibari	flashy young men, residing in the flats – depicted as the semi-urbanised, working-class segment, which aspired to become townsmen
icawe oozenzele	"self-made", "fake" churches
icawe yokwenyani	"respectable" churches
ikhaba	urbanised, working-class elements – younger age-set from 15 to about 25, generally described as "irresponsible" and "wild"
Impundula	witchcraft by lightning
imurikazi	females very much behind the times – derived from *moogie*
labi	community
lobola	bridewealth
manyano	prayer union
mense taal	language of the people
mfecane	the "crushing" (traditionally known as the period of forced migrations, intense political disruptions and turmoil that resulted from aggressive Zulu expansionism)
moogie	a country bumpkin – a person very much behind the times
Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika	God Bless Africa

ooMac	urbanised, working-class elements – the older age-set from about 25 to 35 years
oomatopana	the younger section of the *amatopi* from about 35 to 45 years
ooscuse-me	the "decent" people
oozenzele	"fake", "self-made", not respectable
Poqo	"pure", "alone" (PAC's military wing)
satyagraha	the "truth force" or "soul power" (non-violent resistance)
Tikolo	evil spirit
tsotsi	an unruly, street-wise young man believed to have criminal tendencies
ukutakata	witchcraft
umfundisi	minister
umgalelo	"pouring" (clubs whose business it was to "pour out money" at a friend's party)
Umkhonto we Sizwe	"Spear of the Nation"
umzi	meetings
veld	field
weltanschauung	worldview
yokwenyani	respectable

INTRODUCTION

Situated on the margins of Cape Town, approximately some thirteen kilometres from the city centre on the old Uitvlugt Forest Reserve, still exists one of the earliest African townships in the western Cape, called Langa. Created as a "model" township, Langa has subsequently encountered a mosaic of historical experiences ranging from the fascinating, the vivacious and spirited to the troubled, disparate and depressing. This work focuses on certain aspects of the rich diversity and assortment of historical affairs in Langa during the period ca.1927-1960. In particular, this historical interval has been chosen to explore the marked transition in Langa from being one of the most peaceful, crime-free and politically conservative townships in the country since its official opening in 1927, to becoming a hotbed of militant resistance, and a place of severe social dislocation and polarisation by the time of the famous local uprisings of March 1960. Although a variety of causative socio-economic and political factors crucial to this transformation in Langa can be gleaned from the range of academic research related to the township, little attention has been paid to religious considerations. Accordingly, this thesis seeks primarily to uncover the role of religion – particularly mission Christianity in its variety of forms and contradictory functions of legitimisation, integration and liberation – as an element critical to the striking processes of historical change in Langa.

From its inception, much of the life and character of Langa has been determined externally by the many designated plans, and complex laws and regulations, which sought to extend a controlling influence over the community. The very design for Langa proved critical to its early nature and development. Although, ostensibly geared towards being the blueprint of a "civilised" township, Langa was essentially established as a segregated black area in terms of the developing location system, to keep the existing African population in Cape Town under control, to monitor the influx of Africans into the western Cape, and to supervise local labour requirements more closely. This ensured that local and central government restraints and restrictions became the watchwords to define many

processes and responses within the historical evolution of the township. Much of the historical literature on Langa has tended to focus on the prescriptive segregationist laws and regulations that determined the increasingly harsh living conditions and degrees of repression and social polarisation in Langa. Given the subsequent and varied socio-political responses of the local population which grew in intensity in reaction to the authorities' subjugation and containment of the community, local historians have, therefore, tended to direct their attention to the related themes of policy implementation and resistance to explain the dramatic processes of historical change within Langa during the period ca.1927-1960. As a consequence, there has been a general historical neglect of social, religious and cultural elements in clarifying and contributing to these unfolding processes of longitudinal transformation.

In particular, the nature and function of religious practices have, to a large extent, yet to be explicated. The role of religion, most especially mission Christianity, nevertheless remains crucial to a more nuanced and diversified explanation of change. Significantly, Christianity has, in fact, long been recognised as exerting a powerful influence upon the Langa community, particularly during the inter-war and early apartheid years. Both the early contemporary residents, together with the first academic researchers of Langa, were broadly conscious of the pervasive role of Christianity in the historical development of the Cape township. Since its opening, many residents have commented upon the dominant Christian atmosphere in Langa, where the Christian religion was viewed as the central binding force in the local community, to distinguish it and to make it a more peaceful, crime-free and cohesive township than anywhere else in the country. As late as the 1950s, various petty bourgeois informants continued to describe Langa along these lines and were even prone to suggest that virtually everybody in the township was nominally a Christian.[1] Early sociologists, anthropologists and

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[1]M. Wilson and A. Mafeje, Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township, (Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 91; A. Mafeje, "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa", in M.G. Whisson and M. West (eds.), Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa: Anthropological Essays in Honour of Monica Wilson, (Cape Town and London, Philip and Collins, 1975), p. 167.

historians, who directed their academic attention to the critical study of Langa, made similar generalised remarks about the wide-ranging nature of Christian influence in its various socio-cultural, educational, religious and even political forms. The extensive role of churches in this regard was broadly noted in the sense that religious institutions remained the dominant forms of association throughout the period, with a quarter to a third of the population actively involved in church affairs.[2] Despite these contemporary accounts and this scholastic awareness, it is curious that little empirical documentation has emerged in the mainstream academic literature on Langa to explain the origins, character and role of Christianity in the socio-economic, cultural and political context of the township. Certainly, the historical emphasis on material and political factors partially accounts for the anomalous gap in the literature. For a more definitive explanation, though, it is useful to make a systematic review of the specific academic interests, thematic concerns and theoretical paradigms of the various human science practitioners on Langa to elucidate this neglect. At the same time, such a historiographical analysis is intended to provide a closer examination of the ways in which existing conceptions of historical change in Langa have been documented.

Much of the literature on Langa is disparate and diverse and rarely concentrates on the entire period under review in this work. This is especially reflected in the earliest academic research on the township, begun in the 1940s and largely pursued by Cape Town anthropologists and sociologists, such as Hammond-Tooke, Simons and Levin,[3] later to be followed by the social anthropological

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[2]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker D. Kunene, essay on "What I think of Langa and why", 26 November 1950; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, ch. 5; R. Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", (University of Cape Town, M.A. thesis, 1946), p. 32.

[3]See Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location"; W.D. Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches: A Preliminary Survey of Religion in an Urban Location", (University of Cape Town, M.A. thesis, 1948); H.J. Simons, "Some Aspects of Urban Native Administration", in Race Relations Journal, 7 (4) 1940, pp.101-111; H.J. Simons, "The Chains of the African in Municipal Government", in Race Relations Journal, 13 (2) 1946, pp. 42-49.

works of Botto, Wilson and Mafeje in the 1950s and 1960s.[4] Generally, by practising within the constraints of the positivist-functionalist school of theory and method, these initial studies were inherently ahistorical. Granted, attention was directed to the categories of class, social groups, marriage, politics, leisure occupations and even religion (most notably in the studies of Hammond-Tooke and Wilson and Mafeje),[5] as some of the necessary sociological structures to explore. Yet, as a result of the intrinsic ahistoricism and institutional nature of the approach, an incisive socio-political and religious history that was sensitive to distinctive forms of social expression and vital historical dimensions failed to develop in the early academic scholarship on Langa. Accordingly, initial sociological and anthropological research contributed very little to an understanding of historical developments – cultural, political and religious - within Langa. With reference to religion, as one of the early social anthropologists engaged in the preliminary investigations of Langa, only Mafeje would later develop his precursory studies on the township in a way that would, to some extent, illuminate the local and historical role of Christianity. Having shifted dramatically in his sociological approach by drawing upon Marxist and Weberian influences in the 1970s, he produced a short, but useful article in relating the historical functions of Christianity to class and ideological factors in Langa.[6] Unfortunately, though, this concise academic piece only provided a condensed synopsis and overall historical review, and was not taken up and advanced by later human science practitioners.

With the shift through the later 1970s towards urban and African historical studies, as part of the broader materialist revisionist and more radical liberal emphasis on the historical experience and voice of the underclasses within South African political economy, and also in the particular context of the growing contemporary confrontation between the state and local Africans in Cape Town, the

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[4]R. Botto, "Some Aspects of the Leisure Occupations of the African Population in Cape Town", (University of Cape Town, M.Soc.Sc. thesis, 1954); Wilson and Mafeje, Langa.

[5]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches"; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, ch. 5.

[6]See Mafeje, "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa".

motivation and scope for the historical research of Langa was widened and intensified. As a founder and strong promoter of the University of Cape Town (UCT) History Department's "Greater Cape Town Project" in the late 1970s, Saunders paved the way for an inherently local and urban historical methodology and historiography of Langa with his introductory article on the early establishment and development of the township.[7] Thematically, Saunders focused his primary attention on the corresponding issues of municipal and state policy, and local resistance, in direct correlation to the developing conflict between the state and Cape Africans in the late 1970s, thus establishing a contextual pattern for the next two decades that would be directed principally to political and economic issues. Following on from Saunders, UCT historians in the 1980s and 1990s, such as Musemwa and especially Kinkead-Weekes, as well as the Oxford University doctoral graduate in sociology, Muthien, have developed in a comprehensive fashion, the inter-connected themes of policy implementation and resistance pertaining to Africans in Langa and broader Cape Town over an extended period. Musemwa's study centred on Langa itself, and primarily examined the effects of the policy of municipalisation of the Cape Town City Council (CC) and its popular responses between the years 1927 and 1948.[8] Muthien's doctoral thesis was more widely focused on the Cape Peninsula in general, though Langa did receive an important emphasis. Her work concentrated on the implementation of influx control, the nature of oppositional politics and the degree to which local protest influenced policy formation.[9] Although providing a general overview of these subjects, this study has been forcefully challenged, both in its representation of the unfolding of regional policy

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[7]C.C. Saunders, "From Ndabeni to Langa, 1919-1935", in Studies in the History of Cape Town, vol. 1, (University of Cape Town, 1979).

[8]M. Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa Township, Cape Town, 1927-1948", (University of Cape Town, M.A. thesis, 1993). See also M. Musemwa, "The Struggle for Survival: The Municipalisation of Business Enterprise in Langa Township and the African Response 1927-1948", (Cape Town History Project Conference, University of Cape Town, 11-12 November 1991).

[9]Y. Muthien, "Pass Control and Resistance, Cape Town 1939-1965", (University of Oxford, D.Phil. thesis, 1989). The thesis was subsequently published as State and Resistance in South Africa, 1939-1965, (Aldershot, Avebury, 1994).

before 1948, and in its approach to the local implementation of apartheid, as well as in its analysis of local resistance in the inter-war and early apartheid years.[10] Perhaps more valuable a contribution has been made by Kinkead-Weekes, in his expansive and exhaustive masters and doctoral studies, which have traced the origins and development of state policy and popular resistance to 1973. Again, although such studies were centred on wider Cape Town, there was special reference to Langa as one of the key centres of early African opposition movements. Kinkead-Weekes highlighted effectively issues of labour control, municipalisation and segregationist measures, as well as the internal dynamics and struggles of the developing local African opposition by providing a careful and elaborate contextual analysis.[11]

From these recent post-graduate studies, the socio-political outlines of Langa's marked historical change can be extrapolated, despite the fact that the theses are not primarily geared towards explaining this particularised process. It can be inferred that as a result of financial neglect, and increasingly restrictive and codified regulations and segregationist tendencies on the part of the township authorities, the CC and national government, living conditions in Langa were arguably more rigorous than most other urban townships in South Africa by the late 1950s. This deprivation can be taken to explain the growing radicalisation of the community. From being created as a "prototype" and "garden" town which attracted a strong and relatively conservative petty bourgeois element, which assumed the dominant role with the backing of officials in the late 1920s and 1930s to shape the early cautious character of Langa, it has been suggested that the multiplicity of hardening local, regional

[10]B. Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town: State Policy and Popular Resistance, 1936-1973", (University of Cape Town, Ph.D. Thesis, 1992), appendix, pp. 1-39; H.H. Fast, "Pondoks, Houses, and Hostels: A History of Nyanga 1946-1970, with a Special Focus on Housing", (University of Cape Town, Ph.D. thesis, 1995), p. 16.

[11]B. Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town: The Origins and Development of State Policy and Popular Resistance to 1936", (University of Cape Town, M.Soc.Sci thesis, 1985); B. Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973". See also B. Kinkead-Weekes, "A Brief History of Local Resistance to Apartheid; 1948-1960", (Paper presented at "Workshop on the Western Cape", convened by the University of Cape Town's Centre for African Studies and the University of the Western Cape's Centre for Research on Africa, 6 December 1984); B. Kinkead-Weekes, "The Development of Popular Resistance among Local Africans", (Paper presented at the fifth workshop on the History of Cape Town, 6-7 December 1985).

and national legislation served to draw the various classes and social groups in Langa closer together in increasingly defiant opposition. Thus, Kinkead-Weekes has traced the early nature and role of, amongst others, the Natives (Urban Areas) Act, revised and tightened in 1926 and 1935, the increasingly stringent township regulations, the racial census of 1938 and Proclamation 109 of 1939, as forming the basis of the influx control system and segregation dynamic which placed growing controls over the movement, entry, occupation and accommodation of Langa residents up to 1939.[12] These restrictive laws, combined with deteriorating living conditions, led to the growing movement away from the moderate, reformist approach of the conservative petty bourgeoisie represented on the Langa Advisory Board (LAB) and Langa Vigilance Association (LVA) in the early 1930s, to the more challenging opposition of a "progressive" petty bourgeoisie, which came to entertain a dominant role in the direction of resistance politics by the end of the 1930s. Musemwa and Kinkead-Weekes argue that this new leadership came to reflect the common disabilities of a broad cross-section of Langa residents, and were able to link the local civic bodies with the more radical National Liberation League (NLL), the local progressive branch of the African National Congress (ANC), and the broadly-aligned Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA).[13]

During the years 1939-1948, Kinkead-Weekes has examined the local effects of the process of rapid urbanisation particularly during the early war years, which created an acute housing crisis in the western Cape. With particular pressure being placed on Langa, by the mid-1940s the point was reached where authorities introduced even more repressive measures than before to control the accelerating influx of Africans into Cape Town. This study indicated that this meant the indignity of a rigid registration system being applied to Langa inhabitants, which began in 1944, when the CC

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[12]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", pp. 129-138; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", ch. 1.

[13]Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", pp. 150-167; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", ch. 2.

proceeded with its Native Registration Scheme and established a reception depot in Langa. This was followed up with the passing of the increasingly repressive Native Registration Regulations, framed under the Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, that introduced a new local infrastructure of control from the mid-1940s, which led to close supervision of the employment of Africans in Cape Town and increasingly harsh police acts of deportation against the unemployed and "illegals" in Langa.[14] Again, it has been indicated that this had the effect of shaping a more politicised local resistance movement – led by the emerging new generation of progressive petty bourgeois leaders – which aligned itself as a "United Front" with a range of white and black, bourgeois and working class groups. Influenced by a plethora of more radical, "left wing" ideas, these leaders have been described by Musemwa and Kinkead-Weekes as being able to transmute local community-based protest into the arena of national politics, through the local branches of the NLL, ANC and CPSA, as well as through the LVA and LAB which came under the influence of nationalist organisations. In so doing, this elite progressive leadership offered a critical, defiant and confrontational edge to local community politics that included methods of boycott, mass demonstrations and civil disobedience, and increasingly identified with the concerns of urbanised and temporary migrant workers to provide a broadly-aligned bulwark of opposition. In addition, a minority of even more radical and militant Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) supporters were identified as having emerged in Langa by the mid-to-late 1940s, to provide an extreme form of "non-collaborationist" ideological rhetoric and protest.[15]

Most significantly, discriminatory National Party (NP) legislation in the western Cape context in the 1950s, formulated around the Coloured Labour Preference (CLP) Policy, has been identified by Kinkead-Weekes to have drastically altered the outlook of the township from its early moderate roots. Essentially, the policy has been described as ultimately seeking to obstruct the rapid influx of Africans

[14]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", ch. 3.

[15]Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", pp. 167-175; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", ch. 4.

into Cape Town by envisaging their actual eventual removal from the western Cape to be replaced by "natural" coloured labour. This was to be a gradual process as part of a long term policy, whereby, initially, married Africans (considered to be too costly to house and too permanent a form of labour) would be replaced by "single" migrant labourers in the Peninsula, who ultimately would be overtaken by coloured workers. From the mid-1950s, the first stage of this policy was introduced with thousands of "bachelors" being removed from squatter camps,[16] "black spots" and slums in the Peninsula, to newly-erected single quarters in Langa, so that by 1960 as many as 13 000 men had been relocated in the township. In this context, Kinkead-Weekes has clarified how life in Langa was made exceedingly insecure and restrictive under the threats, envisaged plans and controls of the CLP Policy.[17] In addition, the CLP Policy brought with it an additional tightening of endorsing-out and influx control measures, further restraining Langa residents with the introduction of a labour bureaux in the township in 1953. By drawing attention to increased police raids, the intensifying pass laws, and influx controls being applied also to women, and to ever-worsening conditions of overcrowding, unemployment and the development of slums in Langa, Kinkead-Weekes has alluded further to ways whereby living circumstances in Langa were aggravated. Under such severe restrictions and drastic living conditions, it has been maintained that it was not surprising that more militant and violent strategies of struggle emerged in Langa by the end of the 1950s. These militants have been identified to have developed initially as an Africanist wing of the United Front and to have mobilised support particularly from the growing number of migrant "bachelor" workers in the Langa flats, zones and barracks, whose grievances by the late 1950s were especially pressing. Their militancy eventually found expression in the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) and its intensified approach, which ultimately erupted in the local uprisings of March 1960 and later acts of violence in the township initiated by the PAC's military

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[16]Notice that many of these men were not "single" or "bachelors" as they were classified by the authorities. A number were married according to tribal rites or common law, whose wives either lived in the Reserves or had been repatriated to the Reserves.

[17]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", chs. 5 and 7.

the "moral economy" of Langa (as opposed to its political economy) has still to be established on a comprehensive and sound theoretical and empirical footing. Thus, by the latter part of the 1990s, no major historical undertaking has yet emerged to pursue the important cultural concerns and legitimate religious interests as outlined in Mafeje's succinct review of the mid-1970s, and in the preparatory honours degree inquiries of the early 1990s.

This local and historical neglect of socio-religious and cultural themes reflects a general disregard for, and marginalisation of, religious history that, until recently, has characterised much of South African historical writing. A factor in historical accounts of Langa, this general inattention to the historical study of Christianity in South Africa has been explained in terms of a preoccupation with material and political factors, which arose out of the deepening political and economic crises in the country during the twentieth century that demanded an immediate analytical response from scholars.[21] In addition, this neglect has been attributed generally to the failure of church historians and early sociologists alike to relate their research areas to the broader discourse of mainstream historians by not locating their discrete studies within the socio-economic, political and intellectual contexts of the period.[22] Over the last two decades, however, there have been signs of creative work examining the historical effects of Christianity on southern African societies, which has been geared towards incorporating studies of religion within the mainstream of South African history. The impetus for these new tendencies has derived from revisionist studies that have begun to relate processes of capitalist expansion, state

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N. Mohamed, "Langa High School: The Struggle for Existence", (University of Cape Town, BA (Hons) thesis, 1989).

[21]R. Elphick, "Writing about Christianity in History: Some Issues of Theory and Method", (Paper presented at the Conference on People, Power and Culture: The History of Christianity in South Africa, 1792-1992, University of the Western Cape, 12-15 August 1992), pp. 3, 4; N. Southey, "Historians and Religion: The Treatment of Christianity in South African Historiography", (Paper presented at the Conference on People, Power and Culture: The History of Christianity in South Africa, 1792-1992, University of the Western Cape, 12-15 August 1992), p. 4.

[22]See N. Southey, "History, Church History and Historical Theology in South Africa", Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, 68 (1989); N. Southey, "Historians and Religion".

formation and proletarianisation to religious phenomena, and aspects of class formation and class differentiation to religious consciousness and social agency.[23] The 1970s-1980s movement towards "history from below", especially through History Workshop conferences, has also generated renewed interest in the history of communities and ordinary individuals, where popular beliefs and ideas of the non-elite began to feature as central. Inter-disciplinary contact, too, has encouraged greater interest in religious dimensions, with recent trends in South African anthropological and sociological studies being particularly informative in generating new ideas and methods. The shift from the ahistoricism of the positive-functionalist school of theory and method to the more dynamic and historical approach of Weber and James since the 1970s has especially opened the way for an inherently historical analysis, whereby different types of social experience might be related to different forms of religious expression.[24] Greater contact with such overseas trends, which have especially fostered foreign historians' interest in religion over the last three to four decades, has also widened the scope for the study of religious history in South Africa.

As a result, there is a growing regional consensus which acknowledges the history of religion to be integral to the study of South African society, with much of it being regarded as "people's history". This new appreciation and drive for studies of religion to emerge from a sub-literature into the mainstream of South African history has been especially accentuated in the 1990s, through the staging of a religious history conference - entitled "People, Power and Culture: The History of Christianity in

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[23]See, for example, J.R. Cochrane, Servants of Power: The Role of English-speaking Churches in South Africa, 1903-1930, (Johannesburg, Raven Press, 1987) - the outcome of his doctoral thesis: "The Role of English-Speaking Churches in South Africa: A Critical Historical Analysis and Theological Evaluation with Special Reference to the Church of the Province and the Methodist Church, 1903-1930", (University of Cape Town, Ph.D. thesis, 1982); J. Comaroff, Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and History of a South African People, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1985); J. and J. Comaroff, Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[24]See, for example, A.P. Hare, G. Wiendireck and M. von Broemtsen (eds.), South Africa: Sociological Analyses, (Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1979); Kruss, "Religion, Class and Culture: Indigenous Churches in South Africa, with Special Reference to Zionist Apostolics", (University of Cape Town, M.A. thesis, 1985); A. Mafeje, "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa".

South Africa, 1792-1992" - at the University of the Western Cape in 1992, from which emerged the landmark volume, Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History, comprising many of the presented conference papers.[25] Chidester's seminal work, Religions of South Africa, first published in 1992, has also provided particular stimulus to the study of religious history in the 1990s.[26] Essentially his far-reaching, comparative analysis successfully traces the role of religions, mainly in the nineteenth and twentieth century context of the political, social and economic history of South Africa. These latest efforts have communicated the potential for historical consciousness and religious research to be some of the more exciting areas of development in South African historiography. Clearly, much work, both on a general philosophical and more particular empirical level lies ahead – of which this work seeks to be a part – and such study constitutes a major step towards a more holistic and integral study of South African society.

In terms of the treatment of the historical influence of Christianity in an African context in the twentieth century – the primary thematic concern of this thesis – recent works have advanced valuable insights and laid out contours on a broad longitudinal and national level. These, in turn, open a way for similar studies in a local context. In particular, Chidester has provided a useful theoretical framework in which to analyse the ambivalent role of Christianity in African communities. On one hand, he has indicated how Christianity became implicated in the racial, class and gender relations of an industrialising South Africa, to be used by black and white conservative Christians alike to legitimate existing socio-economic and political structures. Within urban African communities, this meant that Christianity was used to uphold the developing segregationist momentum, and to support processes of black social cohesion along "non-political", "respectable" and moderate lines. On the

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[25]See R. Elphick and R. Davenport (eds.), Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social and Cultural History, (Oxford and Cape Town, James Currey and David Philip, 1997).

[26]D. Chidester, Religions of South Africa, (London and New York, Routledge, 1992).

other hand, Chidester has outlined how Christian symbols and traditions were appropriated by Africans to inspire socio-political struggles for liberation, which in the process had the effect of bringing about social change, differentiation and dissent in reaction to conservative forms and influences of the Christian religion.[27]

Within this framework, both Chidester and Elphick, amongst others, have described in general terms the especially formative role of a combination of conservative and liberal modes of mission Christianity which came to affect powerfully the development of African communities in contradictory ways, especially in the first half of the twentieth century.[28] Those forms of the Christian religion that came together loosely in the unsystematically articulated terminology of the "Social Gospel" during the inter-war period, to shape black consciousness and black religious, cultural and political responses, have a special bearing on the present study. In this regard, a review of the current literature on the historical origins, nature and functions of the Social Gospel in South Africa is useful in locating this local work within wider religious trends. Essentially, the rise of Social African Christianity as a "new" religious form of social and political activism in South Africa has been traced to the growing ideological influences of American and British churches, and to overseas missionary societies which adopted more socially-directed theological affirmations and practical strategies to counter the social ills of industrialisation, and to broaden their ministries in an age of increasing

[27]Chidester, Religions of South Africa. Notice that Chidester's book does not focus on African communities alone (or Christianity for that matter), but on the wider communities in South Africa in general. Nevertheless the influence of Christianity on African communities does receive an important emphasis.

[28]See, for example, R. Elphick, "Mission Christianity and Interwar Liberalism", in J. Butler, R. Elphick and D. Welsh (eds.), Democratic Liberalism in South Africa: Its History and Prospects, (Cape Town and Middletown, D. Philip and Wesleyan University Press, 1987); R. Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel: Missionaries and South African Christians in the Age of Segregation", in Elphick and Davenport (eds.), Christianity in South Africa; Chidester, Religions of South Africa; J. Butler, "Interwar Liberalism and Social Activism", in J. Butler, R. Elphick and D. Welsh (eds.), Democratic Liberalism in South Africa; W.G. Mills, "Ideology in South Africa to 1910: Christianity, Imperialism and African Nationalism", (Paper presented at the Southern Africa Research Program Workshop, Yale University, 23 October 1993); Mafeje, "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa"; Cochrane, Servants of Power; A. Badham, " 'The Badge of Respectability': Anglicanism in Turn-of-the-Century Woodstock", (Fifth Workshop on the History of Cape Town, 6-7 December 1985).

resistance to evangelism. In the absence of radicalism in African nationalist circles and of processes of state secularisation, especially during the 1930s and early 1940s, it has been argued that the Social Gospel became sufficiently popular and influential to affect a range of African social institutions, particularly in regional South African centres (like Langa) where successful Christianisation had taken place.[29]

In terms of its nature, various historians and theologians have delineated the holistic and immanent character of the Social Gospel as that of identifying with the whole of society, and as going beyond personal and transcendent salvation to promote social reform and justice. This ideological shift in the traditional religious emphasis from individual redemption to social reformation, has been fundamentally linked to the predominance of the nineteenth-century postmillennialist belief that the Kingdom of God would be ushered in through the historical processes of social upliftment, reform and betterment through the gradual Christianisation of society.[30] On this basis, the Social Gospel as it emerged in South Africa has been described as being potentially transformative and even revolutionary in character. As such, many progressive African Social Christians drew from Social Gospel resources to develop a dissenting, inter-racial and reformist form of protest in confronting the critical processes of rapid urbanisation, impoverishment and discriminatory legislation. At the same time, however, the tendencies of the Social Gospel to assume conservative and legitimating functions in African communities have also been established. Elphick, in particular, has clarified the moderate propensity of Social Christianity in the southern African region. Basically, he explains that with its roots in more conventional forms of Christianity, and by selectively drawing from the more cautious strands of the Social Gospel – most notably conservative Anglican Christian socialism and Tuskeegeism adopted from Britain and America respectively – the development of a radical Christian

[29]See, particularly, Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel", pp. 347, 348, 361, 362, 365.

[30]See, for example, W.G. Mills, "Ideology in South Africa"; W.G. Mills, "Millennial Christianity, British Imperialism and African Nationalism", in R. Elphick and R. Davenport (eds.), Christianity in South Africa; Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel".

socialist worldview was prevented. For a commitment to the most conservative wing of Anglican Christian socialism and Tuskeegeism necessarily implied the introduction of a paternalist, gradualist and elitist religious worldview which was mainly concerned with guiding and raising "undeveloped societies" through moral and social uplift, and reconciling them with whites according to liberal ideals of harmonious "race relations". In this way, the Social Gospel influences promoted the primacy of personal, moral and economic advancement to the virtual exclusion of political struggle. As such, these ideologies tended to assume as fixed the socio-political and capitalist context in which the social progress of individuals was to be achieved. In the case of Tuskeegeism – associated with the cautious American ideas of Booker T. Washington and brought to South Africa through individuals like J.E.K. Aggrey, T.J. Jones and C.T. Loram in the early 1900s – separate and unequal segregationist relations were positively advocated amongst blacks until such time that they attained personal habits of economic industry. For it was believed that only once blacks had acquired the necessary skills to earn an independent living would they be in a position to claim higher aspirations in life. Thus, for the present, they were encouraged to accept their role as victims of inequality and oppression. Equally, so far as the conservative Anglican Christian social influence was concerned, a firm belief in the imperial order and the British government as the final court of appeal was presumed to promote peaceful constitutionalism and not radical political action. The effect of the adoption of these foreign traditions therefore ensured that Social Christianity as it developed in African communities, periodically eschewed formal politics, was ambivalent about segregation, was weak in relation to "prophetic" socio-political theoretical analysis, and ultimately remained captive to the social structures of established dominance in South Africa.[31]

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[31]Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel", pp. 348, 354, 355; Elphick, "Mission Christianity and Interwar Liberalism", pp. 73-74.

It has been made clear that not only did these contradictory tenets of the Social Gospel bring divisions between conservative and "progressive" Christians, but they also engendered crucial processes of social and religious discord between the petty bourgeoisie as a whole and working class elements. In the view of a number of writers, notably from the revisionist school, this inadvertent capacity of African Social Christianity during the inter-war and early apartheid years was to help to effect social dislocation, class differentiation and religious change in the midst of, and in reaction to, both its conservative and more "progressive" functions. Cochrane, Mafeje and Elphick, for example, argue that this fracturing was the result of forms of alienation intrinsic to the distinctive religious ideology itself. They suggest that the Social Gospel goals of reconciling elites of different races, of imposing white middle-class values upon Africans, and of regenerating local communities through evangelism, western education and moral cultural activities, served to estrange the less educated and rurally-orientated working classes. By promoting an essentially elitist programme, Social Christianity therefore functioned to establish a moral cleavage within communities, distancing the African elites from the mass of working-class people and thereby contributing to processes of class differentiation and dislocation. Consequently, it has been suggested that the rise of an independent working-class subculture in its essentially non-western, traditional and rural form, grew partly in opposition to the Social Gospel programme. At the same time, especially in the tightening post-1948 political era of increasing state secularisation and hardening segregationist legislation, and at a time when the impotency of its social and religious vision was being exposed, the Social Gospel has been regarded as partially motivating the revival of traditionalist, more radical and even millennialist socio-religious ideologies amongst working-class elements. In such ways, the Social Gospel ironically subverted its own influence and distinctly altered the social, political and religious climate in South Africa by the late 1950s and early 1960s.[32]

[32]Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel", pp. 366, 369; Mafeje, "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa"; Cochrane, "The Role of English-Speaking Churches in South Africa".

In relation to the present microcosmic study of Langa, these general thematic trends in the historical role of inter-war and early apartheid forms of the Social Gospel in the broader South Africa are of stark significance and application in reinterpreting the marked historical transition which the township underwent during the period ca.1927-1960. In the first place, in defining the initial context against which later social differentiation and historical change might be gauged, the combination of conservative and liberal modes of mission Christianity proved critical in determining the early elitist, moderate and socially cohesive, religious nature of the township. Especially in a context which officially favoured the development of a "prototype" township in accord with the Christian ideals of "family, civilisation and decency", the conservative socio-political and religious influences of Social Christianity were bound to be far-reaching. Moreover, given that inter-war Langa attracted numerous migrant workers with a respectable "school" and mission background, and a strong petty bourgeois element with deep Christian roots which in close alliance with the authorities came to dominate key positions in the township, ensured a pronounced middle-class, Christian influence in a community that in general was profoundly Christianised. Other contextual factors, such as the fact that inter-racial relations with white liberals of the old "Cape liberal" tradition and white "paternalist" theorists were historically well-developed in Cape Town, together with a situation in which mission churches – strongly influenced by overseas and local Social Gospel proponents – received official sanction and highly influential support, also set the milieu in which the conciliatory and deferential effects of Social Christianity would become pervasive.

At the same time, apart from its integrative functions, the combination of conservative and progressive forms of Christianity also had the decisive effect of reinforcing early structural patterns of class differentiation and social polarisation. Although less significant in the 1930s, these would intensify towards the 1950s. Especially in the early local context where a numerically smaller group of traditionalist, migrant workers was situated alongside an aspirant petty bourgeoisie and "school"

migrant element and where pressure to approximate to European "standards" was strong and the material base of African traditional heritage weak, the primarily "western" and middle-class Social Gospel programme was bound to prove crucial in alienating rurally-orientated workers, who initially practised techniques of self-closure. Yet in addition, other than simply contributing to a moderate and submissive atmosphere in Langa, the conservative and especially liberal strands of the Social Gospel concurrently enhanced a spirit of open defiance which, although less visible in the 1930s, certainly had its roots laid down since the establishment of the township. As early living standards in Langa failed to conform to the status of a "model" township, and as discriminatory legislation under the Natives (Urban Areas) Act, the Hertzog "Native Bills" and the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1937 increasingly imposed common disabilities on a broad cross-section of Langa residents, this prompted the need for stronger political responses. In this, progressive influences of Social Christianity became vital in shaping a dissenting voice of protest in the absence of a tradition of radicalism and militant options in local African nationalist circles.

These crucial religious influences in defining the early character and historical development of Langa, contribute towards providing the underlying community motives and setting against which the subsequent processes of historical transformation might be better understood. For, in combination with developing socio-economic, cultural and political factors, the outworkings of conservative and liberal Christian influences, in different ways, proved central to unfolding processes of social change, differentiation and polarisation. On one hand, the more inherently conservative and elitist strands of the developing Social Gospel had the paradoxical effect of inspiring the emergence of more radical socio-religious and political responses. Predictably, in a local context in which living conditions were deteriorating rapidly in the 1940s and 1950s, and where the policing of passes, labour registration and influx control was rigidly enforced, conditions were likely to radicalise a wide base of residents. In that process, the effect of conservative strands of the Social Gospel to provoke socio-political reactions was bound to be decisive. This was particularly the case in Langa, where an increasingly

moderate group of mainline and independent ecclesiastical leaders presided and where a conservative religious elite sought resolutely to defend the former staunchly Christian and "apolitical" atmosphere of the township. In addition, as local apartheid legislation and enforcement practices tightened with special regard to the Coloured Labour Preference Policy and the forced introduction of thousands of "bachelor" migrants into Langa, the capacity of conservative Social Gospel influences to alienate semi-urbanised and rural workers with their traditionalist concerns and material circumstances of abject poverty proved great. Notably, as these "bachelor" migrants became numerically dominant in Langa by the mid-1950s, bringing with them their own militant working-class concerns and traditionalist socio-religious resources on which to draw in resistance struggles, the failure of elitist Social Christianity to connect with their background and circumstances conditioned processes of severe social polarisation which drastically transformed the socio-political and religious climate of the township. Even the more progressive strands of the Social Gospel, although opening up channels for more confrontational responses, did not prove popular or radical enough to meet "bachelor" needs and cultural situations, and instead tended to contribute to more militant socio-religious and political reactions towards critical historical change in Langa.

These general socio-religious trends and historical processes, addressed in the preliminary discussion above, form the basic framework and terms of reference for each individual chapter in the Langa study. In a parallel fashion, each chapter examines the nature, development and role of this combination of conservative and liberal modes of mission Christianity – its rise, formation, mediation and consequent decline, as well as historically related class and religious processes of integration, differentiation and liberation – according to particular domains of social activity. In the present study, these include the obvious spheres of institutional religion, education and culture, and politics. In particular, each chapter is geared towards assessing the contribution over time of religion in each distinctive social sphere in relation to the fundamental transition in Langa, whereby the character of the community was dramatically transformed.

The first chapter focuses upon organised religion itself as a crucial domain in tracing the propagation, establishment and later demise of the Christian middle-class ethic. Emphasis is placed upon the religious field in its own right, without, however, neglecting the fact that such a field is situated within a specific social context. Thus, the chapter recognises that the religious field is not solely determined by social structures, but by itself constitutes its own internal dynamics with its own particular reality and stability. The concentration is upon the internal relationships and interdependent dynamics generated within this social field. This includes considering the transmission of various strategies and programmes of the range of mission and, to a lesser extent, some of the African independent churches as the dominant forms of religious association in Langa. In particular, the role of the so-called "respectable" churches (*icawe yokwenyani*) is emphasised in this context.

The second chapter examines the educational and cultural spheres as further channels for the proselytisation, mediation and the later decline of Christian Liberal and Social Gospel forms of consciousness, association and recreation. In particular, the focus is directed to the role of mission schools, and semi-exclusive petty bourgeois social groups and cultural networks, which were powerfully characterised by religious motives and ambitions which sought to accord with the values of progress, the Empire and Christianity. These elitist voluntary organisations and local schooling institutions receive primary attention as they proved to be highly influential in defining the emergence, religious outlook and development of entertainment, cultural activities and education in Langa.

Finally, the fourth chapter explores the political sphere and its connections with postmillennialist and liberal forms of Christianity, in the determination of local political programmes, strategies and developments. In particular, the responses of the respectable religious institutions, the leading clergy and churchgoing petty bourgeois social groups are assessed in shaping political opinion and assumptions in Langa.

Along these lines, this study therefore seeks to advance a more penetrating analysis of Langa's socio-political and cultural history. In fact, it is the contention of the thesis that localised interpretations of conceptual constructs such as class, consciousness and social change in the township can only be more fully grasped in the light of African and Christian religious influences and considerations. Certainly, in the case of Langa, questions of petty bourgeois class formation and social group divisions; elitist identity and ideological expression; socio-political collaboration and resistance; and social integration and differentiation can only be substantially explored on the basis of an underlying appreciation of Social Gospel persuasions. As such, the study aims to contribute to the growing body of scholarship that recognises the vital historical role of religion, particularly Christianity, in the shaping of South African communities in the twentieth century.

CHAPTER ONE

Institutional Religion

1.1 The establishment of churches and rise to prominence of mission and Ethiopian-type institutions

A history of the establishment of churches in Langa clearly reveals that the older, historic mission and, to a lesser extent, the Ethiopian churches (as well as a few of the more recently-established mission denominations associated with Pentecostal and Sabbatarian movements), were shown partiality by inter-war and early apartheid state authorities at the expense of the recently-formed African independent denominations. Such state and municipal sanction, along with their international connections and rooted religious traditions, fundamentally ensured that these churches, particularly in the case of the mission institutions, would go on to dominate the religious sphere in Langa, both ideologically and sociologically.

Vested interests on the part of both local and central government authorities, on the one hand, in promoting the existence of mission churches and, on the other, in restricting the settlement of so-called African Indigenous/Independent Churches (AICs) have had a lengthy history in southern Africa. Earlier colonial policy had for long favoured the establishment of missionary institutions in support of the "noble" task of moral and social upliftment of the "native", and, at the same time, been cautious as to the political intentions of emerging AICs. Granted, Cape colonial attitudes were generally more liberal and relaxed than elsewhere with respect to the recognition of independent churches in the late 1800s and early 1900s, at which time a number of Ethiopian-type churches secured official status. Nevertheless, after the Bulhoek incident of 1921 and the ensuing Government Commission Report of 1925, measures tightened considerably in the Cape under the directives of the then central Union Government. The incident involved religious and apocalyptic

defiance in the eastern Cape of Enoch Mgijima's independent Israelite movement against government eviction orders from their sacred site at Ntabelanga, where they were deemed to have established an unauthorised settlement on illegally-occupied land. The affair had ended in the forcible and brutal expulsion of the Israelites, which, in the process, left 183 dead and nearly 100 wounded. The dramatic confrontation had alarmed the government as to the political aspirations of the independent churches, and, following the uncompromising recommendations of the subsequent Commission Report of 1925, the central authorities responded by laying down strict terms of recognition of, and control over, churches for the first time.[1]

Such broad concerns of the local and central government authorities would in due course frame the process of religious institutionalisation in Langa during the 1920s through to the 1960s. Under the jurisdiction of these regulatory controls, the Cape Town City Council would prove to be particularly firm in enforcing such conditions as reflected in the terms of its church leases, with a view to limiting especially the emergence and potential preponderance of AICs. Many conditional and stalling tactics would be employed to obviate the attempts of such churches to gain an institutional footing within Langa, making their establishment extremely difficult. At first, though, it appeared that municipal officials were taking little interest in considering the matter of accommodation of church buildings - whether independent or mission - in the newly-planned township. Focusing mainly on issues of housing in the creation of a segregated living area that would control the influx of Africans into Cape Town and that would substitute for the slum conditions in which Africans were living in Ndabeni and in the city itself, the City Council showed few signs of bearing funds to develop the cultural and social facilities that were previously envisaged as being necessary to turn Langa into a model township.[2] As far as religious institutions

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[1] B.G.M. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets in South Africa, 2nd ed. (London, Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 66, 73, 74; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, pp. 124-127.

[2] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the Native Affairs Committee (NAC), 25 October 1927.

were concerned, up until 1926, with the planned relocation of Ndabeni to Langa, the CC had made little provision for the initial removal and subsequent re-establishment of church buildings.[3] Only once pressures had been applied for the attention of such matters by local churches represented in Ndabeni, together with additional applications for church sites in Langa from the Zion Baptist Church, the Presbyterian National Baptist Church of South Africa and the Congregational Union, was the Council forced to consider the question seriously.[4] Those churches in existence in Ndabeni included the Methodist Church of South Africa (MC), the Baptist Union, the Presbyterian Church of South Africa (PC), the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), the Anglican Church, the Ethiopian Church of South Africa (EC of SA), the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, the Church of Christ and Saint of God, and the Seventh Day Adventist Baptist Church of God. They submitted requests to the Council to be sympathetic in the matter of the removal of church buildings from Ndabeni by, at least, advancing loans for their erection in Langa. The CC, however, decided to grant no compensation whatsoever.[5] In line with the recently-imposed restrictive principles of central government, it was eventually resolved on 19 March 1926 that church sites would only be granted to recognised religious bodies, subject to the supervision of a registered minister of religion, at a rental of ten shillings per annum per stand 50' by 100'. It was also stipulated that a permanent brick building, in accordance with regulation requirements, should be built within six months of an application being approved.[6] These conditions were deliberately formulated to restrict, in particular, the rise of independent churches in Langa. The policy, intentionally, played

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[3] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 21 September 1925, p.70.

[4] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, p. 35; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, p. 75.

[5] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 12 September 1923, p. 169; 3/CT 4/1/5/1247, N51/5, documents on Ndabeni churches regarding questions of compensation.

[6] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 19 March 1926, p. 34 and 19 July 1926, p. 96.

into the hands of the more wealthy and established mission churches, and limited the growth of the smaller, breakaway bodies.

The fact that the acquisition of sites now depended on official government recognition of religious bodies ruled out a number of applications, even amongst those unofficial churches that had acquired building rights under earlier less restrictive legislative conditions and had already established themselves for many years previously in Ndabeni. Since official government recognition was also increasingly difficult to obtain for the emerging AICs since the Bulhoek incident of 1921, this also made it impossible for such churches to gain an early institutional footing in Langa.[7] Unofficial churches were also in no financial position to erect permanent buildings as required by the Council. Whereas the mission churches were relatively wealthy and could appeal to their European donors for funding, the independent churches had minimal access to such resources. Furthermore, since sites could not be bought in the township, but only leased according to the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, building societies were not prepared to provide loans to assist building operations on what was considered "someone else's" land. Building societies were only prepared to grant loans on the basis that churches provide them with a bond over the property. The fact that land could not be purchased legally in townships precluded such a financial arrangement.[8] As a result, a number of churches in Ndabeni were, therefore, financially unable to remove their old wood and iron buildings to erect brick structures in Langa. Thus, despite the suggestion that Ndabeni churches had been promised sites in Langa by Location Superintendent George Panton Cook in the early 1920s,[9] many of these denominations failed to gain a foothold in

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[7]Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p. 73.

[8]See, for example, Molteno Papers, BC 579, document A24.725; AWC 3/5 79, Ndibongo to Town Clerk, 30 May 1941.

[9]AWC 3/5 79, Ndibongo to Town Council, 28 July 1938; AWC 3/14 92, Church of Christ Mission documents, 1944 and 1953.

the new township. Their struggle for official visibility and existence in Langa would become a prolonged, and, in some cases, an unsuccessful one.

African ministers responded to the strict conditions by sending a deputation to the Council with the request to reconsider the question of compensation. The Council continued to refuse any kind of compensatory grant and referred the deputation to the "generous" terms of lease for the erection of churches in Langa.[10] The CC's only allowance was to consider the hiring of temporary venues such as empty board rooms, cafeterias and the unoccupied sections of the barracks' quarters to be used for purposes of worship, until it was possible for churches to enter into leases under the stipulated terms. The deputation also made requests for the smaller church bodies to be permitted to erect wood and iron structures in Langa, considering that such materials would merely go to waste in the demolition of their old churches in Ndabeni should the erection of brick buildings be enforced. It was again petitioned that, at least, council loans should be granted for the removal of buildings. Such requests, though, were met with the same outright rejection.[11] Many churches would therefore be obliged to hold their services in private houses or to hire temporary premises from the Council.

Out of the twelve applicants, then, only three denominations were initially able to signify agreement in 1926 to the conditions laid down by the CC.[12] Thus, the first denominations to be institutionalised in Langa were the mission churches, which had long since received official government recognition. The Methodists received approval for a site in 1929 and only completed their building in 1932 - an indication that municipal authorities were prepared to turn a blind eye to the stipulated time constraints in which buildings ought to be erected, so far as the mission churches

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[10] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/3, minutes of the NAC, 19 March 1928.

[11] 3/CT 4/1/5/1247, N51/5, 12 January 1927; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 15 February 1932.

[12] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 20 September 1926, p. 121.

were concerned.[13] The Presbyterians and Congregationalists were also granted sites in the early 1930s and built their respective churches soon after.[14] Both the Anglicans and Roman Catholics initially held services in their school buildings, which were established in 1929 and 1935 respectively. Their actual church buildings were erected thereafter, in 1934 and 1949.[15] In the process of the establishment of mission churches, it is significant to note the extent to which the Council undertook to accommodate their building and site requests, in stark contrast to council attitudes towards the petitions of the independent churches. The Council went so far as to build a manse for the Presbyterian Church, letting it out at a sub-standard economic rental,[16] and was even prepared to remove official tennis courts to accommodate an alternate site for the Anglicans.[17]

In contrast to the early institutionalisation of the mainline mission churches, either for lack of funding or official recognition, not one independent or essentially black-controlled church had acquired its own building by 1938. Along with the restrictions in the regulation requirements for sites, the Council also made it more difficult for these churches to become established by continually introducing further rules of exclusion, some of which related to the increasingly segregationist tendencies of the Union Government in the 1920s and 1930s. The AME Church, for example, had its application for a site refused in 1934 on the grounds of the developing urban policy of racial, religious and political segregation. The local denomination had been in existence in Ndabeni since 1902, where it had established a reasonably substantial following of around two

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[13] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/3, minutes of the NAC, 18 February 1929; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 10 June 1933, p. 266.

[14] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 20 February 1933, p.129 and 10 June 1933, p. 266; 3/CT 4/2/1/3/597, document B1983.

[15] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/7, minutes of the NAC, 14 February 1935, p. 118; Wilson Papers, BC 880, interview with Father Christopher, 1955.

[16] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 12 April 1933, p. 174.

[17] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 10 January 1934, p. 422.

hundred communicants by 1932, consisting of both Africans and coloureds, of whom the large majority was coloured. In line with the intentions of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act to separate not only Africans from whites, but from coloureds as well in urban areas such as Langa, the CC sought to enforce the racial and religious segregation of the local AME Church by preventing the continued existence of the racially-mixed congregation in the general transfer from Ndabeni to Langa. The Council argued that the church was not numerically strong enough in its number of African communicants to warrant a future site in the new Langa township set aside for blacks only. It was suggested that once the church could prove to have the strong patronage of strictly African adherents in Langa, its case would be reconsidered. Partly to meet these new requirements, following the Council's blanket rejection and along with the closure of Ndabeni in 1935, the church disbanded in Ndabeni and subsequently applied for a temporary venue in Langa in 1936 to hold its services. The CC made a room available in the north barracks for these purposes, but, true to its colours, only on condition that African adherents, and not coloureds, were allowed to make use of the dormitory.[18]

Facing this range of restrictive procedures and requirements, many of the specifically black-controlled and smaller, breakaway churches were similarly forced to rent council property as temporary venues for their services. In close collaboration with the mainline churches, the CC even obstructed certain efforts for access to such premises. For example, applications for the use of a dormitory in the north barracks, by both the Bantu Presbyterian Church (BPC) and the Bantu Methodist Church (BMC) in 1934 and 1935 respectively, were held over by the Council until the views of their mainline counterparts had been considered. Since both the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches of South Africa were losing adherents to their distinctly black parallel bodies both locally and regionally, they sought to restrict the activities of the separate movements. In

[18] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 15 February 1932, 14 February 1934, p. 444 and 11 April 1934, p. 492; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/8, minutes of the NAC, 11 August 1936, p. 204.

accordance with the membership concerns of the mission churches, the Council as a consequence initially rejected the applications.[19]

The question of buildings remained crucial for the smaller, independent bodies, considering that securing these meant a position of status and certain privileges for themselves. In 1938, a resolution was moved through the Langa Advisory Board, again requesting that smaller churches be permitted sites for the erection of wood and iron buildings. It was considered that the money paid in rent for the hire of temporary accommodation from the Council could be put to better purpose if the churches were permitted to build suitable wood and iron structures.[20] Significantly, in revealing the differing interests and concerns of the church bodies at this stage, the already established mission church bodies were petitioning at the same time for the granting of free sites for themselves. This was on the basis that, in certain other townships, mission churches had been given approval for such privileges on account of their, reportedly *bona fide* work in the "upliftment of the Natives".[21] Both proposals were refused.

With the closure of Ndabeni in 1935 and the subsequent increase of the residential population in Langa, there was a surge in the number of applications for church sites, particularly from the independent groups. In order to control the number of applications, with the particular concern again to limit access to the independent bodies, the CC once more set about tightening lease

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[19] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 15 May 1934, p. 508, 11 April 1935, p. 164 and 10 July 1935, pp. 236, 422; Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 5. Notice that the BPC was not strictly independent. According to Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 93, the BPC was "separately organised as a 'Bantu' church, but it still receive[d] missionaries from Scotland, and it [was] in communion with the Presbyterian Church of South Africa; the Moderator of the Church [was] sometimes an African minister, and sometimes a Scottish missionary."

[20] 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 9 August 1938, p. 473.

[21] 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 6 August 1938, p. 464 and 9 August 1938, p. 489.

requirements in 1938.[22] In addition to the constraints of the previous lease, the new document included the restriction that ministers were required to be registered marriage officers. The lease was also limited to a period of twenty years, subject to renewal, whereas before it had been allowed to continue indefinitely.[23] Requirements in Langa were generally very strict, compared to other municipalities such as Cradock and Grahamstown in the eastern Cape.[24] The applications of separately organised and independent groups at this time were particularly closely scrutinised. The BPC in 1938, for example, was singled out from other applicants, largely from mainline bodies, to furnish a host of particulars with regard to the church, its constitution and its financial position, as well as to provide elaborate plans for the buildings it proposed to erect.[25] Few of the largely autonomous black churches could meet the demands of these exacting inspection criteria.

During the war years of the early 1940s, however, with the general relaxation of legislation in the face of the war effort, which included the lifting of government restrictions on substantial building operations, a few of the separately-controlled and independent churches were now able to gain institutional footing. These included mainly the Ethiopian-type and distinctly black-organised churches that had received official recognition in the Cape in the late 1800s and early 1900s, such as the Ethiopian Church of South Africa and the Ethiopian-connected AME denomination, as well

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[22]AWC 3/5 79, Town Clerk to Secretary for Native Affairs, Pretoria, 16 January 1939; Acting Superintendent of Natives to Ndibongo, 31 August 1938; 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 12 August 1938, p. 412.

[23]AWC 3/2 84, Acting Town Clerk to Ndaliso, 2 June 1942; 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 8 March 1940; 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 13 September 1938, p. 432.

[24]AWC 3/5 93, Cradock Location Superintendent to Rogers, 20 September 1945; ibid., Grahamstown Superintendent of locations to Rogers, 17 September 1945.

[25]See, for example, AWC 3/5 79, Ndibongo to Superintendent, 5 September 1938; ibid., Acting Superintendent of Natives to Ndibongo, 29 September 1938; ibid., Town Clerk to Ndibongo, 3 November 1938.

as the Presbyterian offshoot, the Bantu Presbyterian Church.[26] The Ethiopian Church, for example, was able to establish itself as a result of the relaxation on building conditions by being offered a site where it was allowed to build an affordable wood and iron structure.[27] During this period, the mainline Dutch Reformed Church and Moravian Church were also established.[28]

As part of the general loosening of government requirements during the war, influx control restrictions were also lifted to meet the labour needs associated with the growing industrial demands of the war effort in Cape Town. As a consequence, the number of Africans entering Cape Town grew markedly in the early-to-mid 1940s, which was followed by an increasing number of applications for church sites once more. Shortly after the war, as many as fourteen applications were forwarded to the Council,[29] to which the local authorities responded by further restricting the lease requirements. On this occasion, initially none of the churches were granted leases since there were no vacant sites available in the existing built-up area of the township. Churches were advised to reapply once the City Engineer had presented his plans for the proposed extension of the township, and were instead urged to hire temporary premises in the interim.[30]

With numerous delays in the layout plans for the future development of the township, and under continuous pressure for consideration, the Council offered some respite to churches in 1951 by

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[26] 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 12 May 1939; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/9, minutes of the NAC, 13 June 1941 and 14 November 1941; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/10, minutes of the NAC, 14 August 1942; AWC 3/5 79, Ndibongo to Superintendent, 15 June 1944; Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 5.

[27] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/10, minutes of the NAC, 14 August 1942.

[28] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/9, minutes of the NAC, 14 March 1941; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/10, minutes of the NAC, 12 March 1943.

[29] AWC 3/2 98, Rogers to Gurland, 4 March 1951.

[30] AWC 3/2 98, Africa Gospel Church document, 1949; ibid., Rogers to Gurland, 4 March 1951; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, minutes of the NAC, 13 May 1949, p. 599.

approving temporary sites for temporary buildings in established areas to the officially-recognised Bantu Methodist Church, Order of Ethiopia, Presbyterian Church of Africa and African Ethiopian Baptist Church (AEBC),as well as to the Salvation Army, Assemblies of God and Seventh Day Adventist Church.[31] As a result, these churches were able to gain some tenuous form of institutional hold in the early 1950s. Interestingly, the CC continued to favour the applications of mission churches by allowing only the Baptist Union to build in one of the new township areas, despite the fact that layout plans had not been finalised, whilst, at the same time, simply granting temporary sites in the old areas to other churches.[32]

Throughout the 1950s, further applications were held in abeyance as new conditions of lease were considered to accord with Nationalist government policy. With the rise to power of the National Party in 1948, it had become the overt policy of the new government to limit church activities to the particularly "religious" aspects of their task. City councils were, therefore, directed to amend existing leases to comply with the latest conditions laid down by the Minister of Native Affairs which reflected these government concerns.[33] In terms of the new central government lease directives of 1953, municipal authorities were thus forced to draft requirements that included Clause Nine of the prescribed "Deed of Lease", and, similarly, Clause Eleven of the government document, "Permission to Occupy", which allowed for the termination of a lease after only three months' notice, if a church became involved in matters outside its scope. This meant engaging in "subversive activities", or damaging the relations between government bodies and Africans. Clause Ten of the "Deed of Lease" was also to be followed, in its stipulation that no compensation for

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[31] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, p. 599; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/16, minutes of the NAC, 7 June 1951, p. 1379; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/17, minutes of the NAC, 10 September 1951, p. 39.

[32] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/15, minutes of the NAC, 10 March 1950, p. 455; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/16, minutes of the NAC, 2 April 1951, p. 1221.

[33] AWC 3/2 98, Town Clerk to Gurland, 8 October 1954; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/18, minutes of the NAC, 12 September 1952, p. 28.

improvement on sites would be granted if a lease were terminated.[34] In 1954, a government communication even suggested that municipal authorities should consider introducing restrictions in leases to allow for the segregation of churches along prescriptive ethnic lines.[35] This requirement would not be acted upon in relation to Langa. Additional government lease restrictions, issued in 1957, required that a clause be instituted to oblige churches, with a following of fewer than one million, to offer as part of their application, proof of a minimum registration within a specific urban area, of one hundred baptised members over the age of fifteen.[36] By the early 1960s, new lease promulgations were still arriving from the central government, which sought to tighten state controls over churches even further. These directives required that local agreements should be made on a yearly basis, and that no compensation for improvements of sites should be made after twenty years.[37] Such stipulations contrasted sharply with the previous conditions laid down in 1938, whereby leases were to be renewed every twenty years, and where payment of compensation for improvements was included for an indefinite period.

During this period of indefinite waiting for the local formulation of new agreements of lease to agree with government specifications, even temporary sites no longer became available as these areas came to be used for additional housing purposes,[38] so that by the late 1950s, a number of churches shelved their plans for sites in Langa and sought ground in other areas. The experience of the Africa Gospel Church provided a relevant case in point. Having made regular applications since

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[34]AWC 3/25 99, Eiselen to local urban authorities, 30 April 1953; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/19, minutes of the NAC, 1953 document, pp. 749, 750.

[35]AWC 3/3 160, Native Commissioner to Manager of Native Affairs, 28 September 1954.

[36]AWC 3/2 98, Eiselen to local urban authorities, 29 May 1957.

[37]AWC 3/5 93, Native Affairs meeting, 6 December 1960; AWC 3/62, UK agenda, 2 June 1975.

[38]AWC 3/2 98, Town Clerk to Gurland, 9 December 1953; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/19, minutes of the NAC, 3 December 1953, p. 264.

1950 and having even elicited the services of the attorney, Barnett N. Gurland, to plead its case, the denomination eventually abandoned its efforts for a temporary site in Langa in the latter part of the 1950s and concentrated its efforts on gaining a permanent site in Nyanga West thereafter.[39] The African United National Baptist Church (AUNBC) and Full Gospel Church suffered similar frustrations in the 1950s to the point that they directed their attentions elsewhere.[40]

Contributing to this lengthy delay in the allocation of sites and as a further reason for the reduction in applications in the 1950s, was the impact of the proposed Coloured Labour Preference Policy in the western Cape which envisioned the ultimate removal of Africans from the region, to be replaced by coloured labour. Whilst considering the implications of this policy for Langa in its obligations to meet requirements to restrict African expansion in the western Cape, local authorities were reluctant to make additional church sites available in the 1950s. At the same time, given the uncertainties and insecurities with regard to Langa's future status as an African township, with the fear that eventually Africans might be removed from the township altogether, many churches, mainly the AICs, either withdrew their applications or simply failed to make requests for sites. In a sense, they no longer recognised Langa as a potential religious home.[41]

By 1960, despite the fact that there existed as many as thirty or more active denominations in Langa, only eighteen churches had been able to acquire their own buildings. Most of these represented the white-connected, historic and more recently-established mission churches, which included the Anglican Church, Baptist Union, Congregational Union, Dutch Reformed Church,

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[39]AWC 3/2 98, Rogers to Town Clerk, 4 November 1958.

[40]AWC 3/2 84, African United National Baptist Church documents, 1942-1960; AWC 3/25 99, Full Gospel Church of God document, 1957.

[41]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 217, 223-225.

Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church of South Africa, Roman Catholic Church, Salvation Army, Moravian Church, Assemblies of God and Seventh Day Adventist Church. Of the mainly black-controlled and independent churches, only seven, the Presbyterian Church of Africa, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Ethiopian Church of South Africa, the Bantu Methodist Church, the Bantu Presbyterian Church, the Order of Ethiopia and the African Ethiopian Baptist Church, had been able to obtain and build upon official sites.[42] Essentially, it was those Ethiopian-type and distinctly black organised groups that had achieved official recognition prior to 1925 which were able to establish themselves to some degree in Langa. In contrast to the early institutionalisation of the mission and Ethiopian churches, only the BMC and AEBC as the smaller, newly-founded independent churches, had been authorised to erect buildings in the township by 1960. Owing to the numerous restrictions and disadvantages affecting them, many independent churches had abandoned attempts to secure official status and existence in the township. Under these circumstances, it is telling to note that the small Zionist groups which emerged in the 1950s did not even bother to enquire about official sites and recognition. Like many other smaller independent groups, they had become accustomed to accepting their subordinate status, which only allowed them to meet in private homes and dormitories.

In this overwhelming inclination to favour the establishment of the mission and Ethiopian-type churches, the respective central and local authorities certainly created a socio-religious climate conducive to the rise and dominant influence of these denominations. Indeed, those churches with buildings would flourish on the whole and exert a substantial influence in the township, compared with those having the disadvantage of no institutional form. In this way, government officials helped to ensure that the smaller, independent churches would play a minimal role in the daily community life of Langa, in contrast to that of the officially-recognised churches.

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[42]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, paper on "The Langa churches" by A. Mafeje; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 92- 94; AWC 3/59 112, Rogers to Town Clerk, 19 April 1961; AWC 3/27 1, 1960 document.

1.2 The creation of a mission-based and "respectable" church community

The favoured rise of the officially-sanctioned churches led, in particular, to the emergence of a "respectable" and mission-based religious community in Langa. As the earliest denominations to achieve institutionalisation in Langa, and with the patronage of the wider, white, mainstream Christian world and the rich extent of its religious resources, heritage, traditions and entrenched missionary endeavours, the mission churches assumed the lead in setting the tone for normative religious life and behaviour in the township. Following the example of white and black, middle-class mission leadership, especially in the 1930s and 1940s, the Ethiopian-type churches would work in tandem with the "native" missions to contribute to the creation of a religiously pious, yet also socially-orientated and respectable church community. Many of the unrecognised and smaller independent church bodies would even strive to aspire to mission-orientated norms, so that the religious hegemony of the "native" missions' enterprise was hardly challenged in the 1930s and 1940s.

As the first established churches in Langa, the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian denominations were from the start the most formative, with the Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed and Congregational Churches later also playing an important role in laying down the prescribed forms of assured respectability, which was so crucial to the creation of the influential mission ethos. Partly as a result of this mission and Victorian association between Christianity and respectability, as early as the 1930s, these mission churches came to be known as the "respectable" institutions (*icawe yokwenyani*) - a term originating from Langa residents themselves. Both Christian and non-Christian alike consistently reported a very clear distinction between those churches that had acquired such status and those that had not (*icawe oozenzele*). The mission churches were accorded *yokwenyani* status partly on the basis that they had received official government recognition, but

more so, given the fact that they had erected stable and elaborate church and school structures. The fact that they had ministers working in a full-time capacity, who had also attained a secondary education beyond Standard Six was also considered an important qualification for respectable status. Education and external appearances were, therefore, viewed as key components of respectability from an early period in Langa. This was not surprising, given that these characteristics were critical to the early functioning and orientation of the mission churches in the township.[43]

With the intention of imparting a dignified presence and image of respectability in the township, mission churches went to great lengths to ensure the establishment of particularly elaborate church buildings, which together with their schools and manse formed little settlements of "civilisation", of great pride and prestige to their adherents and founders alike. The Anglican Church, for example, took great effort to produce one of the most attractive buildings in Langa. As a consequence, the church, St. Cyprian's, became known for its architectural "beauty", "dignity" and "finesse", and was commended for the "great refinement" and "restraint" in its decorations.[44] This reverence for external appearances was so marked that when the Dutch Reformed Church attempted to gain a

[43]Certain informants of long-standing residence in Langa confirmed that these distinctions between churches were widely made use of already by the 1930s. These categories were still strongly in place by the 1950s when the terms were explored by Wilson and Mafeje in their study on Langa. See Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, paper on "The Langa Churches" by A. Mafeje; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 95; Mafeje, "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa", p. 169. Notice that Wilson and, initially, Mafeje translated these Xhosa distinctions between churches in terms of the categories "real" and "self-made". Later, Mafeje preferred to use the terms "genuine" and "fake". It is clear, though, that respectability was the most fundamental aspect towards defining these notions. This is best illustrated in the field work of Archie Mafeje in his paper on "The Langa Churches" where "real" churches were equated with being respectable. In distinguishing the two types of churches, notice, too, that Wilson also described the length of time a church had been in existence in Langa as being an important factor. She also suggested that "real" churches sought to approximate the various traditions of mainstream western Christianity to a much greater degree than "self-made" ones.

[44]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 1 February 1935, p.87.

foothold in Langa in the early 1940s, a church building of great prestige, "as good as the others", was considered a first priority to its very existence.[45]

The actual process involved in the building of these mission churches itself helped to root the values of self-worth, pride, co-operation and self-help - elements critical to the mission programme - as Langa residents worked together to raise funds for their projects. Fund-raising took the form of concerts and the collection of personal donations, which was well supported by local Christians from a variety of denominations, as well as some white counterpart congregations in Cape Town. In line with such conscious acts of co-operation, these mission institutions thus became important symbols of reverence, belonging and civility in the early communal life of Langa.[46]

In essence, the local mission churches were instituted as so-called "native" missions of the larger, established white denominations. As such, they remained subordinate to, though separate from, the parent bodies, whose systems of organisation, structure, doctrine and worship they nevertheless closely replicated. As strictly African variants of the western Christian tradition, these mission churches reproduced the dominant features of Anglicanism, British Methodism, Dutch Calvinism, Roman Catholicism, Presbyterianism and Congregationalism in a relatively monolithic fashion, generally unrelated to African tradition.[47] The local Anglican Church, for example, displayed the elaborate features of high Victorian Anglicanism, with its formal ritual a replica of its ornate

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[45]Synodical Sending Kommissie (SSK), S.5/2A/37, report by Van Schalkwyk, 11 January 1940, p.8.

[46]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, 14 June 1941; Molteno Papers, BC 579, documents A24.804 and A24.1096; Kondlo, "The Culture and Religion of the People of Langa", pp. 26, 27.

[47]Due to the lack of indigenisation, it is considered of little benefit to give a detailed outline of the history, teaching and doctrines of these churches. These issues have been partly investigated in Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches".

Anglo-Catholic prototype.[48] Services, therefore, typical of the corresponding white Anglican churches in Cape Town, followed the identical Book of Common Prayer and communion format, and manifested the standard Anglican emphasis upon the importance of the priest, confession and the Eucharist.[49] In this way, Langa adherents were submitted to the prescribed Christian codes, doctrines and teachings of distinctly European origin, which powerfully shaped the early character of the mission-based church community along traditional western lines.

As part of this submission to the religious authority of western traditions, local communicants initially also came under the dominant influence of white immigrant ministers, who strongly shaped a Europeanised mission atmosphere and ethic. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, with their origins largely in Britain and with relatively high education qualifications and theological training, middle class ministers retained the ultimate control and authority over the "native" missions. The pastoral leadership of the Anglican Church, for example, which included the British Reverend Fathers Charles Savage, Taylor, Dakers and Bull during this period, originated from the missionary body, the Society of St. John the Evangelist, which had its headquarters in Oxford, England.[50] The Roman Catholic Church (RCC), similarly, was ministered by the white religious order of Irish Capuchin Fathers, which included the priests Alban, Killian, Jerome, Christopher and Crowley, who served the Catholic community in Langa during the 1930s and 1940s.[51] White ministers also predominated in the Dutch Reformed Church (though in this case the ministers were naturally of Afrikaner origin) and the Congregational Church well into the 1940s, and maintained strict supremacy over the

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[48]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 33-45; BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 1929-1939; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Anglican Church field records.

[49]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 35, 41, 42.

[50]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 33-35.

[51]RCC Cathedral, Archdiocesan Chancery, historical notes on the Catholic mission, Langa, by Father Christopher, p. 1.

African ecclesiastical leadership within their denominations.[52] As exceptions, the PC and MC came under the local leadership of Africans. Rev. P. Matshikwe and later Rev. S.P. Lediga presided over the Presbyterian congregation at this time, and the Reverends Bam and Teka over the MC.[53] They were nevertheless bound to the white-dominated hierarchical structures of their respective denominations and, with a proclivity to replicate the actions and functions of their white counterparts, they tended to perpetuate the cultural ethic of European-based missions.

As the first havens of indubitable respectability which offered an orderly, self-respecting and disciplined way of life, along with the early introduction of their church buildings and schools in Langa, the mission churches, particularly the Methodist, Presbyterian and Anglican, and later the Roman Catholic denomination, proved to be the most popular in the township by a large margin. Already by the late 1930s, the mission churches between them accounted for around 80 per cent of those affiliated to churches.[54] This set a pattern that would be reproduced in the 1940s and 1950s. By 1956, the MC had a membership of 2200, the Anglicans held sway over 1000 adherents, and the Presbyterians now attracted 500 members, with the RCC increasing its enrolment to 630 people. Together, these four churches still commanded the overwhelming allegiance with approximately 66 per cent of the churchgoing community attending their denominations.[55]

Apart from the obvious advantages of early institutionalisation and white financial support, the fact that from its inception, Langa drew its population primarily from a high proportion of Xhosa

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[52]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, DRC and Congregational Union field records.

[53]Presbyterian Leader, supplement, "The Story of the Langa Church" by Rev. E.M.V. Thethiwe, November 1969; Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, church list, 26 February 1942; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Presbyterian Church and Methodist Church field records.

[54]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, church figures of the 1930s.

[55]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Methodist Church, Anglican Church, Presbyterian Church and Roman Catholic Church field records, 1955-1956; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 92.

"school" people (*abantu basesikolweni*), who were products of Presbyterian, Anglican and Methodist mission schools in the Transkeian and Ciskeian Reserves, contributed to the large number of mission adherents. Being familiar with the mission organisations in the rural areas of the eastern Cape and in search of "reputable" religious environments in town where the values of refinement, civility and Christianity would be propagated in close accord with their mission school backgrounds, the large majority of churchgoing permanent residents and temporary migrants who were already Christianised in the reserves, thus gravitated naturally to the mission churches. Moreover, in view of the historically territorial and ethnic links with particular denominations due to the fact that individual mission organisations had established themselves in certain regions amongst particular ethnic groups in the nineteenth century, ethnically-aligned groups of church members instinctively tended to frequent particular missions with which they were earlier acquainted in the Reserves. Thus, for example, from the outset many Mpondomisa attended the Anglican Church, many Ngqika went to the Presbyterian Church, many Mfengu and a variety of Xhosa groups associated with the Methodist Church and many Sotho frequented the DRC. This meant that, as with the earlier frontier missions, ethnicity was an important element in the composition of church members.[56]

Of the more permanent residents, from the founding of religious institutions in Langa, the "native" missions were able to attract especially committed membership from the *ooscuse-me* social group - the "decent" people of mission school background, who had for long assimilated the values of western civilisation and Christianity. This social group generally consisted of the small petty bourgeois African elite, who were viewed as the educated, professional and "sophisticated" well-to-

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[56]SSK, S.5/2A/37, Van Schalkwyk report, 11 January 1940, 25 April 1955; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 100, 101; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Mr. Pasha, 21 February 1956. Notice that the Paris Evangelical Mission (PEM) was most prominent in Basutoland. Because of its close working relationship with the DRC, the PEM directed its adherents to the DRC when they were in South Africa.

do, made up of small traders, clerks, businessmen and school teachers. From the beginning, they proved to be the most zealous adherents of the mission churches and, although a minority amongst other social groups represented in the congregations, they also provided the bulk of church leadership.[57] The Anglican Church, particularly, was able to draw from clerks and teachers, who represented the more permanent town dwellers, living in the married quarters as registered tenants.[58] In similar fashion, the MC also attracted many urbanised residents from the married quarters, a large number of whom were long term residents of the western Cape, who had lived in Ndabeni, which in itself carried "real" prestige.[59] The DRC, too, centred around a small petty bourgeois core, who held the key positions of leadership in the church.[60] This support from the petty bourgeoisie as the local educated elite in control of church affairs certainly gave weight to the mission churches' authority and allowed for the stabilisation of their religious influence.

Of the temporary migrant workers, the mission churches from their inception were able to attract a large proportion of those with a respectable "school" background. As Langa drew a relatively strong country-rooted and educated "mission school" migrant element, due to the higher-paying jobs in Cape Town that, in some cases, required some degree of education and literacy, this allowed for a wide base of workers to be tapped for mission participation in the township. This contrasted with the situation on the Rand and in smaller towns like East London, where mission churches were not as influential amongst temporary workers, due partly to the fact that fewer "school" migrants (*amagqoboka*) sought occupations in those regions. Jobs such as those on the mines, were not as well paid and required few skills, which led to the influx of many uneducated and illiterate "red"

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[57]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 27, 101.

[58]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Anglican Church field records.

[59]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Methodist Church field records.

[60]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, DRC field records.

migrants (*amaqaba*), who were traditionalist Africans with little church interest.[61] While the Anglicans, Presbyterians and Methodists all drew from the "school" migrants, the DRC, Congregational Union and RCC congregations were especially composed of this element of the Langa population.[62] Generally, because "school" migrants considered it proper to go to church in the township in continuity with their mission affiliations in the Reserves, the mission churches found little difficulty in attracting this social group. At the same time, there was a tendency to allow the more permanently-settled and established petty bourgeoisie with their more entrenched interests in the township, to take the lead in church affairs. This, at times, led to some religious apathy in town. However, in general, churchgoing was for the most part still considered to be a necessary and respectable activity amongst many "school" migrants.[63] Being steeped in western traditions in the reserves, their participation in the religious institutions of Langa thus contributed to the strong mission outlook of the local church community.

With the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian denominations already dominating aspects of church affiliation, normative Christian practice and forms of respectability by the 1930s, it became difficult to challenge the religious hegemony of the "native" missions, so that for churches still attempting to establish themselves, this meant having to conform to existing patterns of religious behaviour. The Ethiopian-type churches in particular aspired to achieve the respectable status accorded to the mission churches by early Langa residents. With their eventual institutionalisation in the 1940s, and by associating themselves with the mission standards of respectability and civility, they, too, would join the "native" missions in gaining *yokwenyani* acclaim, which, in effect, further contributed to the creation of a conservative and mission-based religious milieu.

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[61]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 18, 54.

[62]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, field records of the Anglican Church, Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church, DRC, Congregational Union and the Roman Catholic Church.

[63]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, paper on "The Langa Churches" by Mafeje.

Amongst the Ethiopian and essentially black-controlled churches, as having the earliest established respectable buildings and full-time and well-educated ministers in attendance by the early 1940s, the Ethiopian Church of South Africa, the Bantu Presbyterian Church and the Ethiopian-associated African Methodist Episcopal denominations were the first to be identified as *yokwenyani* and to become influential in Langa. The Bantu Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church of Africa were accorded such status shortly thereafter, having also met the various criteria of respectability. By this time, as the first wave of independent breakaways from the European churches, the Presbyterian Church of Africa and the Ethiopian Church of South Africa in Langa had largely lost their political nature and now conformed closely to the orthodox forms of mainstream western Christianity. This apolitical and western orientation was also characteristic of the largely autonomous AME and BPC denominations, as well as the recently-formed, independent BMC. This situation emerged partly because of local pressures to be viewed as respectable and orderly in order to command a wide influence in the moderate township, but also for a more general reason. These essentially autonomous and secessionist churches had not formed or separated from the mainline missions on the basis of religious and political dogma, they had done so rather on the grounds of religious control. Thus, although these local churches differed from the "native" missions in that their leadership was distinctively black, they remained doctrinally in close concordance with the mainstream religious bodies. Like the emerging black clergy in the mission churches, their leaders also stemmed from the moderate, lower middle-class and educated African elite, who themselves patterned their standards of behaviour upon their European counterparts. Naturally, this is not to deny that certain elements of African culture were not reworked in the practices of these churches. To some extent, the organisational structures of some, for example, were modelled on traditional society. In some instances, the relationship between the minister and his congregation reflected ties of kinship, with the minister, like a "chief", wielding authoritarian leadership in a hierarchical system over the congregation, which, in turn, tended to act as members of an extended African

family. Particularly by the mid-1940s, as clarified below, some ministers sought increasingly to incorporate, or at least to tolerate, traditional practices within their churches, which they regulated in ways similar to the chief's exercise of control over customs.[64] Nevertheless, in agreement with the findings of Hammond-Tooke, Wilson and Mafeje, it would appear that the emerging Ethiopian and distinctly black churches which came to execute a fair degree of religious authority in Langa along with the "native" missions, functioned primarily to perpetuate mission norms by pursuing a "politics of accommodation" (to use Mafeje's phrase).[65]

By the 1940s, for example, the Presbyterian Church of Africa was known for its conservative and "docile" character, as acting with a certain dignity and restraint, with its ritual leaning in the direction of the Anglican Church.[66] Previously known as the "Donkey Church" because of its destitution and identification with the poor, the Bantu Methodist Church was similarly becoming better-off and growing in respectability. In its worship procedure, the local church replicated the *cultus* (devotional) practices of the "native" Methodist mission fairly exactly. The BMC thus made use of the mission prayer book and other conventional Methodist publications. The denomination was also considered to be strongly loyal and law-abiding, by its refusing to have any dealings with politicians and "agitators". For this reason, the church was able to attract a good number of

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[64]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 11, 19, 77, 86, 89, 90, 92, 97. Since the thesis primarily focuses on the role of mission Christianity, these distinctly "Africanised" elements of black-controlled and independent churches have not been explored in depth. There remains a dearth of material in the case of Langa in this regard. It is hoped that this study might provide initial direction and motivation for the critical advancement of this important area of research.

[65]Mafeje, "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa", p.172; Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 90, 95, 195; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, Ethiopian Church of South Africa fieldworker notes; ibid., box 5, paper on "The Langa Churches" by Mafeje; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p.99.

[66]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, Presbyterian Church of Africa field records.

moderate "school" migrants and even some white-collar workers.[67] The local AME denomination and Ethiopian Church of South Africa had also come to reflect the ideals and interests of particularly Anglican forms of western Christianity. Both churches subscribed to the public Anglican catechisms such as the Thirty-Nine Articles of Faith, the Ten Commandments and the Apostolic Creed, and also made use of freely translated versions of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. By the 1940s, they held cordial relations with white church ministers and township officials. In particular, the AME Church tended to adulate the trappings and complacency of the small black American petty bourgeoisie at this time, a symbolic orientation which partly accounted for its ability to attract a strong middle-class and prosperous mercantile element.[68] With a religious programme similar to its mission counterpart, the BPC, too, was able to draw substantial numbers of the more reasonably well-educated and westernised, who tended to set the tone for the denomination.[69]

Due to the fact that they were, generally, in cultural communion with one another, with similar patterns of membership and religious practice during the 1930s and 1940s, a close relationship developed amongst the older mission and Ethiopian-type churches.[70] As the so-called "respectable" churches, they would work together in ready co-operation by participating interdenominationally on

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[67]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje paper on the Bantu Methodist Church; ibid., Bantu Methodist Church fieldworker notes, 31 January 1956. Notice that the name "Donkey Church" originated at the time of secession from the mother church in 1933. Disagreements existed over monetary matters where it was objected to that funds were being used to supply white superiors with cars when in comparison Jesus was satisfied to ride on a donkey. From henceforth, the breakaway church was nicknamed the "Donkey Church".

[68]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 75, 90; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, AME Church field records.

[69]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, BPC field records.

[70]Notice that this degree of co-operation was difficult to achieve elsewhere, especially on the Rand where little contact existed between the Ethiopian and mission churches. See Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, pp. 60, 87.

important occasions such as ministers' farewell parties and fund-raising events.[71] They were also represented both on a Ministers' Association (MA) and Ministers' Wives Association, from which the *oozenzele* category of churches was excluded.[72] Although the Ministers' Association was initially dominated by white mission ministers, particularly those from the Anglican Church, Ethiopian and independent ministers still gave the organisation their full support. They did this, despite critical remarks from some *oozenzele* churches which insinuated that the MA was an "organ of subservience to the white-controlled churches."[73] The Association tended to be apolitical and religious in nature in its attempts to co-ordinate church activities and special outreach meetings in the township.[74] These collaborative efforts, dominated by the "native" missions, certainly allowed for the growing religious control of the respectable churches with their strong mission-based heritage and message.

In the context of the overwhelming religious hegemony of the *yokwenyani* churches, especially in the 1930s and 1940s, many of the unrecognised and smaller independent church bodies, labelled as *oozenzele*, also aspired to respectable status and sought to imitate the behaviour of the older mission and Ethiopian-type churches. Partly, this predisposition towards *yokwenyani* standing emerged out of functional dependence upon them. Lacking in official recognition, many *oozenzele* churches in Langa were reliant upon the *icawe yokwenyani* to solemnise certain of their religious rites. For example, the scarcity of official *oozenzele* marriage officers led them to seek the

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[71] Ixilongo, no. 46, December 1930, p. 4; Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, 14 June 1941; Molteno Papers, BC 579, document A.24.804.

[72] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, paper on "The Langa Churches" by Mafeje; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p.100.

[73] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, African Ethiopian Baptist Church field records.

[74] Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 100.

authorised marriage services of the licensed *yokwenyani* clergy.[75] In addition, aspirations for respectable status were also partly based on account of receiving government recognition and other benefits. With the respective authorities commanding extensive powers over rights to property and buildings on the basis of good standing, some *oozenzele* churches were compelled to accept the dominant and normative forms of religious behaviour to gain official standing. Like the local Ethiopian *yokwenyani* churches, however, in most cases, the *oozenzele* denominations aspired to respectability on the basis that they were acculturated to the dominant westernised forms of Christian consciousness. With their historical origins, church structures and practices still fundamentally rooted within western religious frameworks, they remained orientated to the religious ideals of piety and respectability. Having been formally created as a separate and race-based religious body within the Church of the Province of South Africa, the local Order of Ethiopia denomination, for example, continued to function within the European-based traditions of Anglicanism. The church sought to resemble the formalism and elaborate trappings of the local Anglican mission, albeit in a superficial fashion, as a means of justifying its respectability.[76] As one of the pioneer "rebel" churches, the local African Native Mission Church (ANMC), too, could hardly be termed "revolutionary" by the 1940s, due to its failure to break from white paradigms of church organisation and practice. Having seceded from the Methodist Church as early as 1884, the local denomination continued to follow the regular procedures and doctrines of the Wesleyan mission institutions. The church was considered to be "homely", "naïve", "practical" and "conservative" in its orientation, in accordance with its desire to be seen as respectable.[77] Again, it is not the intention of the present work to discount the ways in which *oozenzele* churches patterned

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[75]Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", p. 95. Notice that the *oozenzele* category later also included the more recently-established mission churches of the "Sabbatarian" and "Pentecostal" type, such as the Full Gospel, Assemblies of God, Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists.

[76]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Order of Ethiopia field records.

[77]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, African Native Mission Church field records; AWC 3/2 102, ANMC undated document.

their organisations along traditional lines. Some, like the (Bantu) Church of Christ, introduced innovative structural changes in practices like baptism, church leadership and membership procedures to reflect traditional customs.[78] In the first place, however, to refer to Mafeje in his study of Langa, the "fake" churches proved no better in providing a new paradigm. They never "confront[ed] the black middle-class Christian ideology which emphasis[ed] 'respectability', 'orderliness' and Christian cultural indoctrination". They were just as much "products of [western] Christianity as anybody else".[79]

In a religious milieu where the strength and degree of co-operation between respectable churches was well-entrenched and where even relatively close relations between *yokwenyani* and *oozenzele* churches existed in comparison to centres like the Rand,[80] it becomes comprehensible why middle class and mission values came to dominate the pervasive Christian ethos in Langa. The strength of this mission-based and "bourgeois" religious culture is made clear when it is noticed that no comparable independent religious personality or prominent charismatic figure such as James Limba of the (Bantu) Church of Christ, Nicholas Bhengu of the Assemblies of God, Ignatius Lekganyane of the Zion Christian Church, and Isaiah Shembe of the Church of the Nazarites, emerged in Langa during the 1930s and 1940s. Some AIC leaders had relied on their strong personal traits, prestige and legal-cum-moral influence. Others, such as Lekganyane and Shembe, possessed an authority which was based on extraordinary visions, prophesies and healing powers, which had allowed them to attract large numbers of mainly marginalised, rural, semi-urbanised or newly-proletarianised

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[78]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, (Bantu) Church of Christ field records; L. Mqotsi and N. Mkele, "A Separatist Church: Ibandla Lika-Krestu", African Studies, 5 (2) 1946, p. 109.

[79]Mafeje, "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa", pp. 171. This judgement is perhaps overstated, though it does capture the essence of the early *oozenzele* church experience in Langa. Additional research on AICs and their organisational structures and practices, that lie beyond the parameters of this study, is still especially necessary towards clarifying these processes of appropriation, acculturation and Africanisation.

[80]Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, p. 87.

working-class elements.[81] But in a religious community dominated by strongly rooted, urbanised and respectable petty bourgeoisie and aspirant "school" segments of the community, there was little likelihood of them gaining acceptance. Self-styled "Bishop" Limba had himself worked in Cape Town, living in Ndabeni between 1917 and 1928, yet had achieved no large following.[82] By the 1940s and 1950s, the Church of Christ branch that he had earlier helped to administer in Cape Town was still categorised as *oozenzele* and shunned by the conservative Christian petty bourgeoisie as being not quite "normal" and respectable. Although the church was initially known by the township authorities for its good behaviour, petty bourgeois informants in 1941 still distanced themselves from the denomination by labelling it a "sect" that was "queer" and even "mad".[83]

The fact that the Langa church community was based primarily on a strong alignment of mission and Ethiopian *yokwenyani* churches, with the lack of a range of powerful alternative religious groups with which to contend, stood in contrast to other regions in South Africa. This did not, however, mean that there was complete uniformity or unanimity within the dominant mission-orientated religious culture in the 1930s and early 1940s. *Yokwenyani* churches differed over issues of membership and ethnicity, styles of proselytisation and certain doctrinal points. Given that Langa churches displayed virtually every gradation, from some being "high" church, ritualistic, formally hierarchical and authoritarian to others being "low" church, non-conformist and even "bohemian" in character, at times, this brought local religious institutions into petty conflict and

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[81]See Baines, " 'In the World but not of it': 'Bishop' Limba and the Church of Christ in New Brighton, c.1929-1949", Kronos, 19 (1992), pp. 102, 111; A.H. Anderson and G.J. Pillay, "The Segregated Spirit: The Pentecostals", in Elphick and Davenport (eds.), Christianity in South Africa, pp. 231-232, 235-237; H. Pretorius and L. Jafta, " 'A Branch Springs Out': African Initiated Churches", in Elphick and Davenport (eds.), Christianity in South Africa, pp. 218-223; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, pp. 131-136.

[82]Baines, " 'In the World but not of it' ", p.106; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 179, 180.

[83]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, notes and interviews, 14 June 1941.

competition with one another. Incidental arguments ensued over such matters as methods of baptism, conversion and evangelism. So far as matters of membership were concerned, churches accused one another of recruiting adherents from their respective congregations. The Presbyterian Church, for example, was in continuous tension with its autonomous daughter church, the BPC, in the competition for church members. Both denominations blamed each other for drawing away their respective adherents.[84] A few *oozenzele* churches, such as the apocalyptic Sigxabayi and some independent Baptist denominations, also established themselves in direct opposition to the *yokwenyani* institutions by declaring themselves to be "anti-white" and by praying against churches in which King George V was honoured.[85]

Nevertheless, despite the differences and challenges, in stark contrast to other centres, the respectable churches in Langa claimed remarkable conformity and hegemony over the religious development of the church community in Langa during the 1930s and early 1940s. On the basis of similar middle-class religious ideals, and common "school" and petty bourgeois membership, they powerfully shaped the contours of a profoundly respectable and mission-orientated religious culture that would contribute to the moderate outlook of the township in the 1930s and 1940s. This culture was fundamentally based on the emergence of a distinctly mission- and *yokwenyani*-based church ideology that would prove unusually influential in the early evolution of broader Langa societal life.

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[84]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, p. 46.

[85]These criticisms of white-dominated and European-orientated churches originated firstly in Ndabeni in the 1920s: BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 7 April 1920, p. 115 and 20 February 1924, p. 93.

1.3 The early unfolding of mission *yokwenyani* church ideology

With the mission churches taking the early lead in Langa, the dominant religious ideology in the township came to be characterised and rooted in the strange combination of conservative and liberal modes of mission Christianity - firstly, in traditional evangelical missionary ideals of the nineteenth century and, secondly, increasingly in the mission's developing liberal and social programmes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. By the late 1920s, this Christian ideology had come to permeate "native" missions in the Cape. On the one hand, this meant that church concerns went beyond the traditional emphasis on personal and transcendent salvation to allow for more socio-political involvement beyond the walls of religious institutions. However, this religious ideology remained overwhelmingly rooted in nineteenth-century conservative evangelical traditions, which would limit its social influence. Fundamentally, in line with the first endeavours of Christian mission to southern Africa, the first "native" missions, along with later-designated *icawe yokwenyani* and even many of the *oozenzele* churches which followed their example, continued to view their primary ideological role in terms of the spread of the gospel.

1.3.1 A gospel of other-worldly salvation

With the very establishment of their religious institutions at stake in the 1930s and 1940s, mission and *yokwenyani* churches were especially concerned with increasing their enrolments, along with creating a distinct "religious" community. Thus, personal conversion and the moulding of a community of believers dominated the character of the churches' enterprise in Langa, prior to any questions of social reform. Especially for those churches with no history in Ndabeni, the emphasis was necessarily upon missionary work as opposed to being a community church with broader socio-political interests at heart. The dominant emphasis in early church work was, therefore, upon the religious and "spiritual" aspects of their tasks. Much of the concern, reflected in local church

reports, was upon religious aspects of outreach and the spiritual state of the congregation, often with little reference to material conditions in Langa. Particularly in so far as specifically church functions of worship and religious activities were orientated, most *yokwenyani* churches advanced dualistic approaches which emphasised a gospel of other-worldly salvation with specific reference to the condition of the individual. In this way, the personal relationship with God received principal attention, along with the corresponding elements of prayer, devotion and personal piety.[86]

Being primarily established as "native" missions, often administered by white missionary bodies as in the case of the Anglican Church, the mission institutions were by definition and origin particularly fervent about issues of evangelisation in the 1930s. Particular use was made of the African laity to propagate the faith and to conscientise "backsliders", so that Africans undertook the bulk of evangelism and pastoral work themselves. Opportunities for proselytisation offered local Africans with the minimum of education, the chance to exercise leadership, status and influence - qualities denied to early Langa residents in so many other socio-economic and political fields and professions. From the beginning, local churches attracted both the young and elderly men without difficulty to learn to become preachers and evangelists. For avowedly biblical reasons, women were excluded from these prestigious religious titles and founding roles, though it is clear that much of the actual evangelistic work was carried out through the women's *manyanos*. Rev. Father Savage, for example, admitted this in 1942, so far as the Anglican Church was concerned.[87] For men, there were many opportunities for evangelists from Langa to gain prestige by founding new congregations throughout the western Cape in the 1930s. Many prided themselves on being planters

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[86]See, for example, BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 12 April 1928 - 9 November 1939; SAL, Ixilongo, no. 8, February 1927 - no. 57, February 1935; SSK, S.5/2A/37, Circle of Langa reports, 11 January 1940 - 30 June 1960.

[87]BC 1034, AB 1929, CP of SA Diocese of Cape Town booklet, 1942, p. 5.

of churches.[88] These opportunities arose from the fact that few churches were purely concentrated in Langa itself. Although most churches were based in the township, with Langa acting as the headquarters, they also extended far into the Peninsula with an abundance of outstations scattered in many different areas, such as Retreat, Elsies River, Windermere, Somerset West, Stellenbosch and Worcester. The local minister, along with his many subordinate evangelists, was responsible for administering to these outlying communities. This also meant that, at times, the Langa congregation would be without their pastor for long periods. This space provided the ideal training ground for local preachers and evangelists, who became responsible for administering the pastor's duties.[89]

Many of the evangelists were deeply earnest and devoted a large proportion of their leisure time towards the task of converting and encouraging others. It is not for nothing that Langa was known for its "great evangelistic atmosphere" in the 1930s. Especially during the Depression of the early 1930s, despite the prevailing gloomy outlook within the township, the "loyalty" and "real evangelistic fervour" of the "faithful" - both male and female - was well-noted.[90] Many revival services were held throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, with particularly the joint Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational rallies achieving, reportedly, "great successes".[91] In continuity with the experience of Ndabeni, Langa was also well known for its street-preachers from a multiplicity of religious affiliations, who could be heard virtually all day and even all night on certain Sundays. Especially on important celebratory occasions, preachers and their followers were described as parading the streets, chanting "monotonous" messages of redemption and exhorting stray spectators

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[88]See, for example, Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Mr. Lose, 1955, p.374.

[89]BC 1034, AB 1929, Cowley Evangelist, 5 March 1936, p. 115; Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 102; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 42.

[90]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 51 March 1931, p.2.

[91]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p.28.

to join their ranks. At such times, preachers could also be heard throughout the night, reportedly, "in a manner which suggests that the audience in each case (if there is one) consists of people that are all stone deaf!" In the opinion of Father Bull, the Anglican priest, many of these preachers, including those from the Methodist Church, were "untutored" evangelists, who worked themselves up into great excitement as a sign of possession by the Spirit, similar to the methods of the "witch doctor", who "attained inspiration by frenzy".[92] Significantly, due to complaints from certain residents and some respectable churches about the abundance and "nuisance" of street preachers, the Native Affairs Committee of the CC had, in fact, laid down regulations for specific times and prescribed areas for evangelising in Ndabeni.[93]

Already by 1936, Bull feared that the type of evangelism promoted by the mass of "red-hot" gospellers would result in a "burnt-out" district in Langa. Rather than preach a message of repentance through torrents of exhortation which played on a sense of fear, the Anglican priests preferred a dignified procession through the township, which was considered a "gentler" method, aimed at appealing to those "who are children of God by nature". These processions were elaborate affairs, led by cross-bearers and followed by servers in scarlet cassocks, catechists, preachers, children, the celebrant and his acolytes in full regalia. They were noted for their reverence, order, self-control and respect for the hearers. Many onlookers took off their hats and showed great respect for and deference to the procession, although there were those who were said to "hurry away".[94] White students, largely from the Stellenbosch Theological School, were also a common sight in Langa on Sundays from an early stage of the township's establishment. In association with

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[92]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, article by Bull, 24 October 1936. See also ibid., article by Father Rumsey, 29 December 1924, p. 70.

[93]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 16 May 1927, p. 13 and 26 June 1927.

[94]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 24 October 1936, p.18, 13 April 1939, p.137 and 14 November 1933, pp.14-19.

the Dutch Reformed Church, they undertook house visits, distributed tracts and "concentrated on the Lord Jesus". They were taught to avoid arguments over issues of church and politics.[95]

Despite the wide-ranging evangelistic activity in the 1930s and early 1940s, in general few new converts were actually made in Langa. Given that the township attracted a high proportion of "school" people meant that a large majority of the residents was already Christianised. Often the gospel messages simply fell on the ears of the converted. Churches thus derived their membership primarily in accordance with previous religious affiliations outside Langa and not from souls "saved" in Langa. By the late 1930s, most mission churches had become alert to the sociological phenomena peculiar to Langa and rather focused their efforts on encouraging lapsed Christians to attend church.

Apart from the early emphasis on evangelism, the creation of a distinct religious community also formed the essence of the specific orientation of church work towards its adherents. Similar to the programmes of the mission stations of the 1800s, this religious pastoralism was based on evangelical traditions of piety and spiritual devotion. Like the missionaries before them, ministers perceived their primary role in this regard as the celebrating of Sunday services, imparting religious instruction and involving the congregation in certain charity work. With this constant emphasis upon the specifically religious aspects of the faith, the *cultus* elements came to be understood by churchgoers in Langa, from as early as the 1930s, to be some of the most crucial aspects in defining Christianity, as presented in their often elaborate forms by the respectable churches. Much of

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[95]SSK, S.5/2A/37, document on "The NG Bantu Church in Cape Town and the surrounding areas", 8/54, p. 2; ibid., yearly report by Scheffler, 1952, p.3; ibid., undated document on "Die Skiereilandse Hulpsendingsvereniging".

yokwenyani church life centred around these *cultus* elements, such as the importance of the Sunday service, baptisms, weddings and the administration of the sacraments.[96]

Most respectable churches focused their religious efforts and activities upon Sunday as the sacred day of Christian observance. In competition for the leisure time of their adherents, they advanced heavy Sunday programmes, which sometimes endured for the whole day. From the 1930s onwards, Sundays in Langa were reported to be an impressive sight - "something different to the aspect of any other township on the Sabbath" - when people would turn out *en masse*. Church services during this time were also recognised as one of the few social amenities available to ordinary Africans and were said to provide the greatest single source of entertainment.[97] The Anglican, Methodist, Dutch Reformed and Roman Catholic Churches were particularly passionate about stressing the importance of Sunday observance. The Anglican authorities in Cape Town in the late 1920s, for example, emphasised that churchgoing should be the most important activity in an African's life. They argued that:

> it is not enough to go to prayers only . . . you must attend Mass on Sundays if possible, because that is the Lord's service . . . If you wish to be strong and serve God, go to communion as often as you can.[98]

In this way, it was made, at worse, almost a sin or, at least, a blight on one's spiritual life, not to attend Mass on Sundays. In response to such exhortations, the Anglican Church in Ndabeni and later Langa was particularly strongly attended, with the congregation being characterised by "deep" spirituality in the 1920s and 1930s by virtue of its well-noted seriousness, excellent behaviour and

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[96]Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", p. 94.

[97]Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", p. 150; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, interview with Mr. Pasha, 21 February 1956, p.439.

[98]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 3, September 1926, p.7; BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, article by Savage, 1 April 1927, p. 70.

"real" reverence at Sunday services.[99] The Dutch Reformed Church was also very insistent about maintaining the sacred character of Sundays. Any form of sport or dancing was strictly forbidden on the holy day.[100] Prayer, devotion and personal confession were thus important elements of Sunday activity which received major emphasis.

The sermon also took its pride of place in Sunday services and generally tended to stress the personal, inner relationship with God, so much so that local Christians emphasised the knowledge of God and the individual believer's private association with God as the primary and conclusive features of Christianity. Sermons in the Anglican Church were preached with a notable degree of deference, veneration and religiosity. A review of the central themes covered during the 1920s and 1930s, reveals that messages of God's divine grace, individual purification, hope, encouragement, personal piety and perseverance in preparation for the life hereafter, predominated in the Anglican denomination.[101] In typical Anglican tradition, Fathers Bull, Taylor, Dakers and Savage were especially prone to preach about the moral, individualistic and strictly religious consequences of key Christian events such as Easter, Lent and Christmas. Lent, for example, was conveyed as a time to purge oneself of one's "inmost sinful thoughts" with a view to "drawing closer to God" and "counting one's blessings" at a time when some were "drifting away from the influence of the Church and the grace of the Sacraments".[102] Similarly, Easter was presented as a period for personal re-dedication and reflection with a view to becoming thankful and achieving inner peace,

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[99]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 4 April 1929, p.142.

[100]R1/1 Circle of Langa, report on 6-9 March 1952 meeting; ibid., report of commission, 1-5 April 1953.

[101]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 19 January 1920, p. 37, 1920, p. 156, 3 October 1921, p. 261, 5 March 1925, p. 117, 4 April 1929, pp. 142, 143, 26 October 1932, 14 November 1933, p. 16, 27 January 1938, p. 67 and 13 April 1939, p. 137; SAL, Ixilongo, no. 8, February 1927, p. 1.

[102]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 5 March 1925, p. 117.

so that one might be "bidden to arise, [to] go and tell glad tidings to others".[103] As far as the Methodist Church was concerned, sermonising there was known for its emphasis upon high emotionalism and showmanship. Ecclesiastics reportedly functioned as demagogues "kindling the right cash-register brand of hysteria". Again, primary concerns of Methodist sermons focused upon the future spiritual dispensation: for example, the need to endure hardships in the battle against Satan in preparation for the life after death and the need to gain comfort by looking beyond the things of this world.[104] The Dutch Reformed Church was also known for its stress upon the inner faith relationship, with the founding white minister, Van Schalkwyk and later Scheffler, together with local DRC evangelists, such as Xaluva and Mokhatla, continually emphasising the quest for sound personal character and lifestyle.[105] In addition, many *yokwenyani* ministers displayed inabilities to apply and exegete biblical texts in an effectively critical manner. Rather a preference for petty and incidental textual argument was not uncommon. For example, Rev. Jobodc in the 1940s and later Rev. Tshabangu of the Presbyterian Church of Africa were inclined to homilize on topics such as the primary role of a deacon. Basing their inferences upon insignificant passages in Acts, they would extrapolate that the deacon's essential function was economic and not all-encompassing, as was characteristic of the deacons in the Anglican Church, who acted as probationary ministers.[106]

With such concerns being of fundamental importance to local preaching from an early period in Langa, sermon references to direct social relations, other than family bonds and internal church

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[103]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 4 April 1929, pp. 142, 143.

[104]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 13 April 1939, p. 137; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, Methodist Church field records.

[105]SSK, S.5/2A/37, state of religion reports, 20 February 1940 and 9 May 1947; R1/1 Circle of Langa, report on Langa meeting, 6-9 March 1952; ibid., Langa notes, 25 March 1960.

[106]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, 26 February 1942; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Presbyterian Church of Africa field records.

interrelationships, were scarce. Few attempts were made from the pulpit to integrate the biblical message historically with the large-scale features of Cape Town and broader South African society, so that many existential social areas of the African living situation in Langa remained untouched by clearly defined theological extrapolation during services. Rather, the devotionalism and piety of the Anglican Church, the emotionalism and theatrics of the Methodist Church, the tendency towards incidentalism in the Presbyterian Church of Africa and the internalism and moralism of the Dutch Reformed Church, all stifled the emergence of any powerful social critique stemming from the pulpit especially in the 1930s and 1940s. Thus, an ahistorical biblical message of personal dedication remained at the core of mission *yokwenyani* preaching during this period. Its objectives were particularly pursued by the older generation in Langa, who sought to follow the religious sincerity and piety of the earlier Protestant rural missionaries. Clearly, the overwhelming religious emphasis of sermons, often delivered in a grandiose and authoritative fashion, helped to define a largely spiritual gospel for the *yokwenyani* church members as they received systematic instruction within their church walls.

Religiosity was therefore at the heart of Sunday services in Langa and, for the more respectable *yokwenyani* churches, celebration days were especially sacrosanct and ostentatious occasions. The Anglican Church on St. Cyprian's Day throughout the late 1920s and 1930s, for example, displayed great spirituality, pomp and ceremony. The celebration would last the entire day and include two services, a family meal and a procession. The services were elaborate affairs with the clergy in full regalia, administering the flamboyant rituals. The lay preachers would occupy the front pews, clad in their cassocks and surplices, with the rest of the congregation behind them, strictly separated on either side according to one's hereditary sex. The parade would be led by various cross and banner bearers, followed by the congregation, the rector, the choir, clergy in capes carrying incense, many servers and a band. The Governor-General, Mayor, Langa Superintendent and members of the City

Council would be invited to such occasions, and, by all indications, received a great response on their arrival.[107]

Weddings were also pretentious and hallowed affairs, especially during the earlier period of the township's existence. They were highlights of township life for permanent residents of high social status. These elaborate weddings were considered the "real" types of marriage, to which many aspired, given the solemnity, dignity and religious sanctioning of the occasions. The older generation were again particularly instrumental in the organisation of such ostentatious occasions. They viewed court marriages with disfavour, considering them to be "undignified", "unconsecrated" and "worldly" forms of the sacred contract before God.[108] Pomp, ceremony, splendour and piety were thus ideals perpetuated by the respectable churches in a variety of religious forms. From the beginning, many adherents measured the churches' prestige on the basis of these external features, such as the extent of its membership, the nature of routine services and the number of evangelistic activities. Having impressive material facilities upon which to organise, the *yokwenyani* churches, therefore, became the measure of status and were positively valued by church people.

Prescribed forms of piety and devotion were also strongly inculcated in the variety of church social activities, which offered alternatives to the various forms of organisation in Langa. Due to the relative weakness of other voluntary associations, especially during the 1930s and 1940s, churches provided more space-time activity than any alternate social organisation. Through their many and diverse activities, churches thus established a certain hegemony over their members by becoming important social centres and dominating symbols of community. Social formations ranged from

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107SAL, Ixilongo, no. 54, June 1934, p. 2; BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 4 April 1929, p.143, 4 October 1929, p. 21 and July 1934, pp. 146-147; Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 38.

108Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", pp. 94, 98, 99.

cultural societies, youth brigades, charity organisations and catechism classes to temperance organisations, Sunday schools, choirs and women's associations.

All these various social forms were fundamentally rooted in nineteenth-century evangelistic and mission ideology, which essentially accounted for them being relatively static in their development and orientation. The objects of virtually all the early Roman Catholic small societies, for example, were purely devotional well into the 1950s.[109] Women's *manyanos*, which, like elsewhere in South Africa at the time, were fundamentally the heartbeat of the local churches, were also strictly devotional. Faith-related matters and an other-worldly orientation were critical to the functioning of the *manyanos* in general. The objectives of the Ethiopian Church of South Africa's *manyano*, for example, were typical of many such groups. It sought to pray for Africa and its conversion to Christianity, to speak about and to pray for husbands, sons and daughters, to pray for the minister and local religious affairs, and to pray for the President of the denomination and the national conference.[110] These groups also exhibited characteristics of a "closed" society, where legalism and formalism prevailed. Due to the emphasis on the spiritual aspects, *manyanos* in Langa, conforming to similar religious patterns throughout South Africa, only played an important role within narrow church confines with little broader social significance. Their concerns were purely for the church by organising special concerts to raise funds, tea-parties, ministers' farewells and wedding receptions. Other activities included visiting the poor, sick and dying, the creation of handicrafts, bible studies and singing sessions.[111] Thus, although potentially powerful and influential female social pressure groups, the inability of *manyanos* to integrate their religious *weltanschauung* with the pressing

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[109]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Roman Catholic Church fieldworker notes, 1955.

[110]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p.93.

[111]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 30, 43, 76, 92; Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14404, Langa Social Survey, December 1941; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, Assembly of God field records; ibid., Order of Ethiopia and the Congregational Union field records.

socio-political concerns of the local Langa community, meant that they functioned apolitically throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

1.3.2 A gospel of respectability and civilisation

Combined with the overwhelming concern with specifically religious tasks in church activities, early Langa ministers of the 1930s and 1940s, like their missionary predecessors of the previous century, were also committed to transforming the individual lives of their African adherents along social, educational, cultural and even political lines. In this way, the ideological goals of winning converts and shaping their religious lives did not occur in a vacuum, but were very much socially and culturally determined. This process of social acculturation was fundamentally based on nineteenth-century and European meanings of civilisation, respectability and Victorian morality, based on paternalistic and trustee principles, so that the first Langa "native" missions once again reflected the social ideals of early southern African mission stations in this regard.

From the 1930s, as the first established Langa churches, the "native" missions were especially concerned to function like their nineteenth-century predecessors, as socio-cultural bridges to civilisation, whereby members might be channelled from indigenous systems of behaviour and organisation into a range of respectable activities and civilised societal life. Most of the early *yokwenyani* ecclesiastical leadership, white and black, conceived of their role in terms of leading their congregations towards more self-respecting ways of life in line with European civilisation. Bringing people to Christ, at the same time, meant civilising them. Early religious discourse of sermons was punctuated by exhortations to refrain from the "iniquitous" lifestyle of the "uncivilised heathen" and to follow instead the righteous path of the "civilised" Christian. The pioneering white Anglican priests in Langa especially made this distinction between the "civilised"

faithful and the "uncivilised" pagans. They reinforced nineteenth-century religious stereotypes, for example, by suggesting that Christians wore the "best" attire, in comparison to the worldly attire of the "properly heathen". Such rhetoric was known to keep individuals with ragged, shabby clothes away from the Anglican Church.[112] Even by the 1950s, *yokwenyani* ministers continued to stress polemical European definitions of the meaning of culture and civilisation. The Presbyterian minister from 1943 to 1958, for example, Rev. S.P. Lediga, who was considered one of the most "polished" westerners in Langa, conveyed his task in 1955 in terms of reducing the "inferiority" of the African. This, he perceived had occurred as a result of the historical lag of the civilising process which, in his words, "had only begun two centuries ago with white missionary contact." He dwelt upon the gulf between himself and his "less sophisticated", even "backward" congregation, and indicated how he hoped to raise them over time to new levels of civilisation.[113]

From the very beginning of their church experience in Langa, local congregational members themselves associated civilisation with Christianity by assuming their ministers' terms of reference. Critics were understood not to be of the "civilised peoples". The church routine itself was recounted as "the school in which the people learn to be civilised". Church-going was considered to be one of the most important proprieties of life. It was described for many people as being the only glimpse of real prestige and refinement, especially in terms of "stepping out in a suit, with a Bible tucked under one's arm". Christians in Langa thus displayed a high degree of consciousness in defining themselves in terms of civilisation and respectability from an early stage. Local Christians in the 1930s, for example, took great heed to dress in a refined manner, being very conscious to conform to the Victorian ideal of external respectability. As the staunch members and leadership of the

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112BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 14 November 1933, p. 18 and 4 October 1929, p. 22.

113Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Lediga, 1955.

churches, the *ooscuse-me* were particularly concerned with the external appearances of dress, politeness and manners, and became the main reference group for local Christians.[114]

In this way, churches essentially saw themselves as providing "decent" forms of social behaviour, particularly in relation to the "degrading" and "sordid" elements of the township environment in the 1930s and 1940s. In their very paternalistic terms, the Anglican Reverends Savage and Bull, for example, regarded a vital task of the church as offering to "boys" arriving in Cape Town, decent conditions of life and the influence of just employers, as compared to living with the "treacherous" pressures of drink, dagga, sexual immorality, low class slum dwellers and exploiters common in the township.[115] By the requirements of their own civilisation, such ministers considered themselves to be responsible for the presence and surroundings of "school-type" contract labourers, whom they sought to protect from the moral and physical dangers of town.[116] As such, the Anglican Church upheld sober qualities of cleanliness, self-discipline, self-control and industry, and tried to ensure that most of the Anglican male workers were in good employment. Playing their role in an industrialising capitalist economic order, the Anglican priests would recommend individual Africans of "real" character to those employers they considered worthy as running enterprises of commercial success and industriousness. On their part, larger local industrialists particularly sought after black Christian workers in Langa, who were conceived to be better workers than "raw natives".[117]

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[114]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 13 April 1939, p. 138; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Mr. Lose, 1955, p. 500; ibid., box 2, interview with Mr. Pasha, 21 February 1956, p. 439.

[115]SAL, Ixilongo, no.20, February 1928, p. 1.

[116]BC 1034, AB 1929, CP of SA Diocese of Cape Town booklet, 1942, p. 2.

[117]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 20, February 1928, p. 1.

A high view of morality, often connected to Victorian ideals, was also a central feature of the church gospel of respectability and civilisation. Respectable people were considered by local Christians to be those who were morally upright with decent and appropriate manners. Most of the *yokwenyani* churches believed that a large part of the world's ills was caused by individual and collective moral failure. It was considered that this could be cured through greater moral effort in private and public life. Many of the churches, therefore, promoted high moral standards. Jesus was the supreme moral teacher to be assuredly followed. The view of morality, however, was highly selective and tended to focus upon explicit and external features. Family values and private morality were of fundamental importance. A love of home, respect for parents and chastity were inculcated at an early age. Staunch Christians in Langa were noted by fellow believers and non-believers alike for their "decent" houses and high standards of family living. In contrast to this adulation of family life, the local clergy identified drink, dagga, gambling, adultery and, in some cases, even dancing, as the main evils in Langa, which threatened a "clean" family orientation.[118] This primary focus upon explicit moral problems would invariably eclipse any ecclesiastical attention to the structural ills of the socio-economic order in Langa.

Especially during the 1930s and early 1940s, as the various churches sought to establish themselves in the township, the required standards of social conduct were exceedingly strict to ensure "real" converts and adherents of good standing. Virtually all the churches placed a strong emphasis on discipline, regulations and rules.[119] To this end, Hammond-Tooke argued in the 1940s that Langa churches had the tendency to base their religion on the negative aspects of the Christian code, rather than on the positive tenets of Christian love and charity.[120] Amongst the *yokwenyani* churches, for

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[118]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 11, 27, 47, 54, 56, 74, 89; SSK, S.5/2A/37, state of religion report, 9 May 1947; R1/1 Circle of Langa, report 1-5 April 1953.

[119]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 10, 12, 40, 54, 73, 103, 104.

[120]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 11.

example, the Congregational Union, the Salvation Army, the MC and the PC prohibited the use of alcohol, tobacco and dagga.[121] The Bantu Presbyterian Church went so far as to exclude its members from frequenting dance halls and cinemas, which were considered to lead only to "wildness" and "temptation".[122] The *oozenzele* churches showed a similar high regard for uncompromising living by issuing a stringent and exacting set of rules. Rev. Xibenye's Holy Church of Christ, for example, forbade divorce, drinking, dancing and smoking. Notably, the last-mentioned practice was strictly outlawed on the basis that neither Jesus nor any other biblical personality was on record as being a smoker.[123] The Seventh Day Adventist Church and the Cape Town branch of Limba's (Bantu) Church of Christ demanded complete separation from the worldly practices of card-playing and dancing, as well as from the commonly recognised evils of drinking and smoking.[124] So severe was the (Bantu) Church of Christ in its requirements for exemplary behaviour that it became labelled as being "anti-crime" by the township authorities in the early 1940s. Not surprisingly, officials regarded the church as a great asset towards maintaining the existing order and stability in Langa by upholding such extremely high moral standards. They even considered its members to be better behaved than the adherents of the mission churches at that time.[125]

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[121]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 27; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Salvation Army, Congregational Union and Methodist Church field records.

[122]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 11.

[123]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Xibenye, 1955.

[124]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 54, 56; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Holy Church of Christ field records.

[125]AWC 3/5 93, Rogers to Native Commissioner, 20 February 1942; ibid., Cradock Location Superintendent to Rogers, 20 September 1945.

In order to maintain these rigorous and high moral standards, deemed so crucial to respectable and dignified socio-religious behaviour, disciplinary action in churches was common during this period, as was a strict membership procedure. Potential members were closely scrutinised as to their moral and spiritual state. Great emphasis was placed on a reputable code of conduct as being an important prerequisite for membership. The AME Church's membership proceedings were especially elaborate, demanding attendance at preparation classes and a searching investigation of an individual's lifestyle, with a view to preventing the admission of what were termed, "undesirable agitators".[126] In the same way, discipline was geared towards inculcating habits of high morality, whereby converts might be weaned from deeply-rooted indigenous beliefs and practices. Generally, church discipline was aimed at the overtly irreligious practices of drinking, brewing, adultery, gambling and card-playing. Little attention was directed to aspects of implicit religious thought. In line with the churches' preoccupation with alcohol, beer-drinking and brewing became the main causes of disciplinary action. [127]

Indeed, the problem of alcohol was the single major concern of churches during the 1930s and early 1940s. Most churches, including the aspiring *oozenzele* denominations, placed a total ban on the drinking of alcohol, along with the prohibition of home brewing. Some respectable churches, such as the Methodist and Congregational denominations, were especially adamant about making temperance obligatory. Teetotalism was considered by them to be the supreme embodiment of respectability. Abstinence was a great symbol of regenerate life, compared to the practices of beer-drinking and domestic brewing, which were perceived not to be in accord with civilised rites. The

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[126]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 73.

[127]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 11, 27, 47, 54, 74, 89.

restrictions on alcohol were so marked that even the "red" non-churchgoer understood the "evil" of beer-drinking to encompass the main content of Christian teaching.[128]

The 1930s were, then, especially characterised by the majority of churches' insistence upon temperance. Teetotalism also accorded with the churches' exaltation of family life, since beer-drinking was understood to result in violence and the neglect of the family. It was also part of their preference for things orderly, clean and controlled. With such passionate views about the evil of alcohol, many local churches campaigned for the encouragement of temperance organisations in Langa, of which the Independent Order of True Templars (IOTT) became the most influential. The IOTT was established as an alternative teetotal organisation with Methodist connection, and offered "bright, cheerful social activities" as compared to turning to liquor in a "degraded" environment. It was exceedingly strict, showing much concern for ritualism and legalism, and was patronised by a number of relatively wealthy, educated members. These adherents were, generally, lower middle class residents of the urbanised type, who prided themselves upon their leadership positions and elaborate titles. Their houses were noted by fellow members for their cleanliness and beautiful gardens, compared to the "shabby" houses and "uncultivated" gardens of beer-brewers.[129] The churches' preoccupation with beer-drinking also meant that issues related to liquor were some of the few concerns whereby churches, acting corporately, actually took some form of direct socio-political action. During the late 1920s and 1930s, local clergy pressed for the prohibition of liquor and government restrictions on domestic brewing as a means of removing the alcohol problem, and thus of ensuring the development of civilisation and Christianity in Langa. Such responses

[128]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Teka and Rev. Qobo, 1955; ibid., interview with Rev. Zondeki, 1955.

[129]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, notes on the Langa community, 1936.

underlined the churches' commitment to the dominant conservative social principles of the time which stressed a moral basis to the problem of liquor.[130]

Adultery and premarital pregnancies were also considered to be serious problems in the 1930s, particularly given the disproportion of the sexes in Langa, with single males being in the majority from the township's opening in 1927. As part of the rigid Victorian ideological framework, *yokwenyani* churches viewed any form of adulterous behaviour with extreme disapproval and were quick to take disciplinary action. The older generation of staunch Christians was especially disgusted by the disclosure of promiscuous and licentious conduct.[131] This ideological tendency to view "unvirtuous" and "wanton" practices simply on moralistic grounds, in effect meant that little reflection was made upon the social consequences of the tightening migrant system, with its accompanying controls in the 1930s and 1940s. The Dutch Reformed Church, for example, was only concerned about the extra-marital relations to which these conditions led and worried, too, about children who were left fatherless in the rural areas, rather than to consider questioning the structural impact of the migrant labour system upon sexual practices and family life.[132]

At the same time, central to the propagation of this European-based, middle-class morality was the demand for the abandonment of traditional social mores. Especially during the 1930s and early 1940s, most *yokwenyani* clergy considered the relinquishing of "foolish" customs for civilised practices to be critical to the formation of the "real" Christian. Adherents thus were praised for marrying in the church. Such Christian weddings "with the proper preparation of prayer and

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[130]See chapter 3 (3.1) for a more comprehensive longitudinal discussion of these corporate church responses.

[131]Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", pp. 75, 127.

[132]R1/1 Circle of Langa, report 1-5 April 1953.

confession" were "real", compared to the "foolish" indigenous rites.[133] Initially, *veld* initiation was also regarded as "uncivilised". Members were not permitted to participate in such ceremonies. The Anglican Church rather sought to Christianise the practice of male initiation. It was stipulated that circumcision could only take place in hospitals and that priests would be on hand to impart religious instruction as the young men recovered in the church hostels.[134] The Bantu Presbyterian Church also rejected the process of circumcision very strongly at first. The interaction of church members during the ceremony with pagan young men was regarded as having a negative effect upon them, considering the "obscene conversations" which ensued. Most churches, too, particularly the Bantu Presbyterian and the Seventh Day Adventist denominations, rigidly opposed "heathen" dances as leading to sexual temptation and immorality. In a similar way, the visitation of African herbalists also received stern disapproval.[135] Initially, most *yokwenyani* churches, therefore, reacted strongly against indigenous customs and received the unqualified support of the conservative petty bourgeoisie to this end.

Critical to this process of creating a distinctly Christian community, based on the nineteenth-century ideals of respectability, western civilisation and a rejection of African values, was that Langa adherents were submitted, as were others in the previous century, to the socio-political structures of established dominance. For Langa churches continued to espouse loyalty to the existing state order and even to the British throne and empire in the 1930s and early 1940s, as common articles of faith, which revealed their ideological continuity with the socio-religious commitments of the previous century.

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[133] SAL, Ixilongo, no.8, February 1927, p. 1; Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", p. 94.

[134] Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 39.

[135] Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 11, 19, 28.

In practice, from the late 1920s onwards, most *yokwenyani* churches made sure that respect for law and order, along with loyalty to the state, were preached as common riders to the gospel of respectability and civilisation. The taught notion of respectability included mutual respect between different classes and races, and also a common commitment to the principles of negotiation and arbitration. Together with the fact that many *yokwenyani* churches proselytised as basic tenets forms of integrationism in the 1930s and 1940s whereby only civilised Africans should be granted equal rights and access to Christian statesmanship, such attitudes underlined the local churches' attachment to the existing Cape social structure, which restricted the African franchise on the basis of property rights. The Anglican Church in the 1930s was a particularly strong proponent of the established system as it sought to engage in its primary task of producing civilised Africans, who might prove themselves and so work for the perceived better aims of Christian statesmanship, and the development of the eventual common citizenship of all races.[136] Many respectable African ministers, particularly of the older generation, who had served in the Ndabeni era, also revealed their acceptance of the existing order by adhering to the established dictum associated with Rhodes, whereby equal rights should be available only to civilised men. With so many of their charges considered to be uncivilised, they, too, worked within the given Cape electoral structures by seeking to overcome the "African lag" in the "process of civilisation", through nurturing potentially respectable, black-voting citizens. Even when the Representation of Natives Act of 1936 removed Africans from the common voters' roll in the Cape, local ministers continued to argue for equal rights on the basis of acquired civility and property.[137] In these ways, the gospel of civilisation and respectability accorded very closely with contemporary United Party (UP) rhetoric of "family,

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[136]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 9, March 1927, p. 3 and no. 33, June 1929, p. 1; BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, article by Bull on "Native Citizenship in South Africa", March 1936, p. 126.

[137]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, p. 126; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Tshabangu, 1955.

civilisation and decency", and served to legitimate Cape structures of dominance throughout the 1930s.

This Europeanised church ideology ensured that *yokwenyani* churches displayed great reverence towards the local authorities from their very inception. Accordingly, most churches became known for their strict compliance with the regulations of the township administration. Churches were highly regarded by officials for being "loyal, non-political and purely religious".[138] The ideological deference and alignment of Langa churches with the local governing systems and authorities was made especially explicit in their close working relationship. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, earnest requests were sent to township officials to solicit an "honourable" participation at important religious occasions. Particularly close relations existed with the Langa Superintendents, G. P. Cook and later Stuart Rogers, who were often invited to the dedication of new buildings, foundation stone blessings and ministers' farewells. Great respect and high regard was shown to Cook and Rogers on these occasions, who were usually requested to make an official address. It was not uncommon for the Superintendent to be introduced as the "father of the people in Langa" at these functions. At the same time, respectable ministers received reciprocal invitations to act as leading spokesmen at official functions. At such gatherings, they would assume the same platform as local and state officials, which, at different times, might have included the Mayor of Cape Town, the Native Representatives, the Langa Superintendent and members of the Advisory Board and City Council. Ministers would offer up prayers, which often sought to uphold the government and its officials in their duties and responsibilities. Goodwill between persons of different races, along with references

138See, for example, AWC 3/5 93, Cradock Location Superintendent to Rogers, 20 September 1945; AWC 3/14 92, Gcukumeni to Rogers, 1 April 1948.

to Christian unity, was also emphasised. For their part, local authorities would commend the Langa churches for their "noble" work in the township.[139]

The ideals and values of mission *yokwenyani* church ideology, therefore, frequently coincided with the goals and practices of local, regional and state authorities, so that, at times, it was difficult to distinguish between their ideological orientation. In many ways, then, socio-political forces reinforced and set the parameters for church submission to local and regional authorities. This has already been underlined in the functional dependence of all Langa churches on the governing authorities for their very existence, recognition and rights to property. Many ministers were forced to maintain outwardly cordial, civil and appropriate relations with ruling officials to ensure that their churches gained institutional footing and thereafter secured their property rights in Langa. For example, one cannot help but detect a note of forced appreciation, perhaps even sarcasm, on the part of Rev. Ndibongo of the Bantu Presbyterian Church, in his acceptance of allocated church property in 1944. Although this brought to an end many long years of delays and complications while awaiting access to the church grounds, Ndibongo, who was not unused to criticising the government in private, would nevertheless reply in a courteous and genial fashion to secure the allocation of land. He thanked Superintendent Rogers with the following words:

> we appreciate the long kindness and sympathy you have shown to us for the long years . . . we have been treated with a wonderful humanity, we do not know whether we have been doing our share to you, sir.[140]

Governmental prescriptions, powers and delineations most certainly contributed towards defining local church dependence, yet, at the same time, a religious ideological framework of subservience,

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[139]See, for example, GG 2318 2/244, order of service, 24 May 1934; SAL, Ixilongo, no.54, June 1934, p. 2; BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, article by Bull, July 1934, pp. 146, 147; AWC 3/5 79, Ndibongo to Superintendent, 15 June 1944; AWC 3/62 87, Roman Catholic Church document, 3 November 1948; AWC 3/5 79, Magodla to Rogers, 2 November 1952.

[140]AWC 3/5 79, Ndibongo to Rogers, 15 June 1944.

rooted in a nineteenth-century framework, arguably lay at the core of local church deference towards the established authorities.

Notably during the 1930s, *yokwenyani* church ideology even tended to propagate missionary ideas of the previous century which assumed the permanence of British traditions in South Africa. Both black and white clergy from the older mission and Ethiopian-type churches advocated strong loyalty to Britain as the symbol of a Christian nation upholding the virtues of justice, civility and righteousness. Throughout the 1930s, local respectable ministers played leading roles at public functions in Cape Town in honour of the British Governor-General, the Earl of Clarendon, where they displayed faithful devotion and steadfast allegiance to the British Crown, Royal Family and Empire. Their speeches included such deferential, though mindful statements as, "we look to the white man as our elder brother for guidance and sympathy" and "do not forget us in England, because we are still but children with a long way to go."[141] Dutiful and reverential support for the British crown was still evident in the early 1940s when local ministers exhorted their congregations to champion the British and Christian cause in the war. Although some ministers were critical of Britain, in the end they appealed to their churches to support the British war effort. On the one hand, Rev. C.N. Nontshinga-Citashe of the Ethiopian Church of South Africa, for example, was bitter over Britain's failure to come to the aid of Haile Selassie in Abyssinia against the Italian invasion of 1935. He was also disparaging about the United Kingdom's lack of concern for African rights in South Africa, in spite of the "faithful service" of Africans in World War I. As such, he partly blamed Britain for the introduction of the discriminatory franchise and land legislation of 1936, which accordingly made his people feel as if they were "sitting in a motor car driven by a drunk driver [where] at every turn and corner . . . the car [seems to be] going off the road into a cliff [so that] the future [appears] dark." He believed that the failure to place pressure on the UP

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[141]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, July 1934, pp. 146, 147, 28 March 1937, p. 114 and 27 January 1938, p. 67.

Government served to alienate "native" sympathy and loyalty to the throne. On the other hand, despite these failings and in the face of Nazi aggression, Citashe continued to argue that Great Britain should still be counted upon as the saviour nation that would usher in a new global Christian society. Mainly because of his *yokwenyani* Christian commitment, Citashe thus ultimately promoted the war effort, under the banner of Britain as the defender of "Education, Free Religion and Free Speech", in the following religious terms:

> When the United Nations of the World are engaged in a hard struggle against the forces of Darkness and of Self-will, the Christian Church continues the fight against evil and sin. Their Leader Christ, as in the year AD. 30 still urges his followers: "I am the Way, the Door, the Truth". His teachings remain the bases of World peace and the foundation of Democratic Governments. To ignore his teachings is to invite War; to embrace them is to end wars. May this be the last war and the beginning of a full fledge march towards full Christian Government throughout the World.[142]

In order to propagate this imperialistic Christian message, Citashe would also hold local meetings in support of the war where he would make use of pro-British speakers.[143] Such ecclesiastical advocacy and sympathy for the war effort made certain that the respectable religious institutions overwhelmingly supported Great Britain. Some local women's church guilds, led by the St. Cyprian's Mothers' Union, even embarked upon an enthusiastic fund-raising drive in order to assist the arrival and settlement of English refugee children in South Africa. The guilds sought to reciprocate the services, aid and provisions previously supplied "so lovingly and devotionally" by Britain on numerous occasions.[144] The Anglican Church also held a concert to raise funds to this end. The event received widespread interdenominational support, although it did have its individual detractors, even from within the *yokwenyani* churches.

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[142]Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 7 January 1944.

[143]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14404, interview with Citashe, 18 August 1940; Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 14 September 1940.

[144]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14404, notes, 21 September 1940.

Amongst others, two preachers, Madolo and Majola from the Methodist Church and BPC respectively, took particular exception to this display of sympathy for the "white man". Madolo, for example, refused to show support for British refugees on the basis that "all the European is trying to do is to wipe the Bantu from the face of the earth." He argued that since the British had shot and destroyed the Africans' cattle in the 1890s' rinderpest epidemic, taken their land and forced blacks into town to work for whites, they deserved to be rebuffed. Similarly, a number of female *manyano* members from the Methodist, Bantu Presbyterian, the Presbyterian Church of Africa and AME denominations objected to the fund-raising drive. They believed that since Britain had not advanced the cause of the African in South Africa, they were not obliged to help the British in return. They were also critical of Britain's inaction at a time when Africans were becoming impoverished under heavy taxes and poor wages. As a result, they were adamant that they owed Britain nothing and preferred not to look to a foreign nation for salvation.[145]

Instead, in a more Africanist way, they sought to look to God's working hand in Africa itself as their key to deliverance. The women claimed that Africa held a special place in God's plans. Just as Africa had been chosen as a refuge for the greatest of all kings, Jesus Christ, when Herod had sought to destroy him before he would later influence the course of world history so decidedly, so they believed the continent would spawn a black king who would come to rule the world. They, indeed, referred to King Edward VII's sudden death in these terms to justify their assertions. They were of the opinion that he had witnessed a black boy wearing a crown, in a vision that subsequently stunned him and led to his death. The vision, supposedly, symbolised the hope that Africa would eventually rule the other continents. In addition, these dissenting women made reference to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the book of Daniel, chapter 2, to offer proof of their claim. They suggested that the various parts of Nebuchadnezzar's image represented the kingdoms into

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[145]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14404, fieldworker reports, 24 September 1940 and November 1940, p. 1.

which the world would divide, only to be united in time by a single ruler, who would have his origins in Africa. Thus, although Africa was presently experiencing "terrible suffering" and "bondage", as the Israelites in Egypt and Christ in North Africa had endured in the past, the women were convinced that "even thou, Daughter of Ethiopia" would be delivered. In this way, rather than to look to Britain, support her needs and pray for a British victory in the war, they concluded that it was vital to focus on God's will being done in Africa. Only by trusting and being faithful to God alone in their own circumstances of oppression, would they be freed, like the children of Israel.[146] Despite this minority critical opinion which reflected some important African-orientated theological interpretation, loyalty to the British throne and empire nevertheless remained at the core of *yokwenyani* church ideology throughout the 1930s and 1940s, thereby linking congregational members to a prescribed dependence upon long-standing British legal traditions and social manners in South Africa.

1.3.3 A gospel of moderate social reform

Despite the dominance of traditional nineteenth century missionary and conservative evangelical ideas in the actual functioning of Langa mission churches and in the socio-religious shaping of their adherents' lives, new liberal and socially-orientated Christian programmes were also important in contributing to the nature of the emerging religious ideology in the township in the 1930s. Thus, although specifically church-centred activities focused inwardly on matters of personal faith and moral development, *yokwenyani* ministers were nevertheless influential in drawing the educated elite, in particular, into forms of social and political activism on an individual basis. Local white and black priests in both the mission and Ethiopian-type churches, under the strong leadership of figures like the long-serving Anglican Fathers Savage and Bull, and the Revs. S.J. Mvambo, P.

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[146]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14414, notes, 24 September 1940.

Matshikwe, C.N. Citashe, F.J. Tladi, A.M. Mbizela and Bam, displayed wide acceptance of the tenets of theological liberalism and the Social Gospel. Although not always clearly articulated or theologically substantiated specifically at church gatherings, these ministers nonetheless revealed a sincere interest towards improving race relations, facilitating dialogue and reforming government policy and social conditions. Encouraged by the optimism of postmillennialist Christianity, they hoped for a new moral basis to world society, based upon the fundamental precepts of Christianity, which would be ushered in by their respectable adherents.[147]

During the 1930s, the local Anglican Church was particularly influential in putting these socio-political concerns into practice. Its ministers had been profoundly inspired by conservative strands of Anglican Christian Socialism that had taken hold in the theological direction of its seminal missionary body, the Society of St. John the Evangelist, in Oxford. They were convinced that, along with the government and municipality, the local church had a pioneering role to play in meeting the social needs of Africans as processes of urbanisation unfolded in Langa. So far as Bull and Savage were concerned, this included contributing to the provision of housing, education, recreation, employment, hospitals and charity in the township.[148] Ethiopian church ministers were also increasingly falling under the sway of cautious American socio-religious ideas, largely associated with Booker T. Washington's form of Social Christianity, which was in the process of being introduced into South Africa through individuals such as J.E.K. Aggrey, T.J. Jones and C.T. Loram in the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s. Through their attendance at the respective General Missionary Conferences, and later, from 1936, at the conventions of the Christian Council of South Africa, where socio-political elements of Social Christianity were increasingly espoused, both

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[147]See, for example, Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 7 January 1944.

[148]BC 1034, AB 1929, CP of SA Diocese of Cape Town booklet, 1942, pp. 2, 4.

mission and Ethiopian ministers were further encouraged to become strong exponents of Social Gospel ideology.

Essentially, these new socio-political ideas engendered a sense of social Christian duty amongst Langa adherents which went beyond the promotion of personal and transcendent salvation. As part of their collective social commitment, local Christians were encouraged to support direct corporate church responses and indirectly-backed mission-orientated ventures which sought to address social inadequacies and unduly repressive measures in Langa, by engaging in organised religious appeals and concrete, individual projects. In particular, the aspiring Christian petty bourgeoisie was targeted by ministers to join mission and Christian-based welfare, cultural and civic organisations, especially in the 1930s and 1940s, as a means of fostering social reform, justice and the gradual Christianisation of society.[149] In these ways, the ideas of Social Christianity were critical to the establishment of a central socio-political role for individual Christians in the broader Langa community. Most especially, this involved the black Christian elite, which came to assume leadership in a range of these socio-cultural organisations and who, in turn, would fundamentally shape the character of community relations in the 1930s, according to the moderate principles of mission ideology.

Despite proving to be highly influential in engaging local Christians in Langa's societal affairs, this developing social philosophy nevertheless remained limited in character and function by being bound to traditional mission ideals and practices. These, in turn, circumscribed the socio-political responses of their adherents. With a specifically religious focus primarily emphasising pietistic and evangelical beliefs, local churches failed to articulate an integrated religious message that might have allowed for a more reflective social response from developing. It has been made clear that

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[149]Chapters 2 and 3 develop these issues further, so that a general discussion is not entered into here.

very little socio-political commentary was made in sermons or during mid-week *manyano* meetings. Although a number of mission clergy were convinced of the need to usher in the Kingdom of God through the historical process of social reform, they nevertheless very rarely clarified these concerns theologically at church gatherings, given that they saw their first task in the light of the sacred and spiritual development of their flock. Thus, socio-religious attitudes were often simply assumed and not developed in an explicit theological fashion in churches. This meant that the social engagement of local Christians and their churches was often entered into unquestioningly, and was thereby influenced by the narrower interests and practical concerns of mission Christianity. The following chapters examine the socio-cultural, educational and political responses of churches and their adherents, that reflect the largely personalised, concrete and pragmatic foundations on which their societal role was conceived. Essentially, rather than subject society to a general critique, local Christians preferred to concentrate upon particular problems and to debate their specific solutions, given that they drew in the first place from their individualistic, practical and pioneering mission knowledge. In addition, as local mission churches, like their nineteenth-century predecessors, continued to endorse the developing industrialising, socio-economic and political order, the effectiveness of their social responses was further limited. Their long-standing conservative views on the gradualist attainment of citizenship, and their loyalty to the British Government also checked any more radical and independent socio-religious philosophy from developing. Thus, although potentially transformative in character, the emerging social consciousness of the churches developed within the limiting framework of nineteenth-century, socio-religious European traditions which fundamentally worked against the establishment of a revolutionary and prophetic religious voice in the township in the 1930s and 1940s.

Still as a potent ideological force, this combination of conservative and liberal modes of mission *yokwenyani* Christianity nevertheless contributed instrumentally towards the shaping of a moderate religious culture, as well as a Europeanised middle-class outlook within the broader township,

especially during the 1930s and early 1940s. The ideology succeeded in bringing together the respectable sections of the community, especially the petty bourgeoisie and aspirant "school" migrant workers, in a moral unity as they adopted assimilationist goals and ideals. In this way, the Social Gospel was noted to have exerted a "stabilising influence" upon Langa. Many township officials, as well as petty bourgeois and working class residents alike, commented on the peaceful atmosphere in Langa, which they attributed to dominating church notions and definitions of discipline, spirituality, respectability and civilisation.[150] But such elements did not remain static.

1.4 The later development of mission *yokwenyani* church ideology

During the late 1940s and 1950s, although still functioning within a similar framework, mission *yokwenyani* church ideology underwent some important new developments. Firstly, church conceptions about religious discipline began to change. Whereas some churches, most notably the DRC, Congregational Union, Salvation Army and Holy Church of Christ,[151] continued to apply strict codes of conduct in the 1950s, others became less severe in enforcing religious rules of behaviour, membership and duty. In particular, Levin has documented how previously drastic measures taken against the "evils" of adultery and having illegitimate children declined by this period.[152] By the late 1940s, with their institutions now strongly rooted in the township, a number of established *yokwenyani* churches, such as the Anglican Church, the BPC, the AME denomination and Ethiopian Church of South Africa, felt secure enough to relax church requirements and standards of discipline. It is also true, though, that they failed to take strict action

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[150]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, research paper by D. Kunene; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, interview with Mr. Pasha, 21 February 1956.

[151]SSK, S.5/2A/37, state of religion report, 9 May 1947; R1/1 Circle of Langa, report 1-5 April 1953; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Salvation Army and Congregational Union field records, 1955; ibid., Holy Church of Christ field records, 1956.

[152]Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", p. 76.

partly for fear of losing members, at a time when few converts and new adherents were being drawn into the churches.[153]

A related sphere of change concerned the way in which numerous *yokwenyani* churches became more open to the role and legitimate nature of African customary practices. Whereas in the 1930s and early 1940s *yokwenyani* churches had tended to reject traditional African practices out of hand, by the mid-1940s, a number of respectable churches had begun to ignore or to act leniently with respect to certain forms of traditional behaviour. This emerged partly due to the recognition that traditionalism remained very much alive, even though concealed publicly amidst the pretensions of Christian respectability, and partly because of sheer bewilderment in confronting the complexity of religious and cross-cultural interrelationships. The fact that *yokwenyani* churches had failed to grapple with the complexities of customary issues in the 1920s and 1930s meant that indigenous beliefs and practices continued to co-exist intact, especially in private, alongside the public image of civilised Christianity. For example, amongst the older generation of Christians, belief in pre-Christian *Tikolo* and *Impundula* still existed.[154] It was possible, too, for a female communicant to be a confirmed witch doctor.[155] In fact, it would appear that some covert witchcraft practitioners actually sought after respectable church membership to escape accusations of *ukutakata*.[156] This potential for traditional superstitions still to hold sway over church adherents was made especially evident in the support for the visiting seer, Alfred Bukani, in the early 1940s. Many within the church community, which included the *yokwenyani* minister, Citashe, were accepting of the

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[153]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Anglican Church, BPC, AME Church and Ethiopian Church of South Africa field records, 1955-1956.

[154]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 28, 105.

[155]See, for example, BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, article by Bull, 14 November 1933. p. 17.

[156]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, interview with Mr. Msila, 7 March 1942.

extraordinary visions and prophecies of this traditionalist, before such time that he was expelled from the township by the local authorities in 1941 for causing a commotion and dividing the Christian community.[157]

A realisation of the tenacity of these existing currents, together with a lack of theological and philosophical answers to the problem, resulted in few *yokwenyani* churches vigorously confronting certain traditional practices by the mid-1940s. Some local ministers even developed personal attachments to, and biblical justifications for, particular indigenous rites. Thus, for example, although having responded firmly against traditional initiation in the 1930s, the Bantu Presbyterian Church no longer concerned itself with this difficult problem by the 1940s.[158] Generally, churches also showed perplexity over questions of circumcision and initiation by this time. The Presbyterian and Seventh Day Adventist Churches sought to avoid the issue, and the Ethiopian Church of South Africa had little to say against it, preferring to argue that "circumcision or none, Christ is all that matters in a Christian's life".[159] Similar confusion over and avoidance of the fate of polyganists on conversion existed at this time, in contrast to the strict requirements to surrender one's wives in the 1930s. Most churches, like the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and Ethiopian Church of South Africa in the 1940s, displayed general leniency towards polygany and did not stipulate a rigid policy or procedure with which to deal with polyganists. The Ethiopian church minister even argued that polygany had scriptural precedent in the Old Testament.[160] Few regulations were also made with regard to *lobola* by the 1940s. In fact, most Christians had come to view *lobola* as

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[157]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, notes, 14 June 1941 and 24 July 1941; ibid., interview with Ntshinga, Petu, Ndunyane, 1942; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/9, Langa Advisory Board (LAB) minutes, 15 July 1941 (annexure to NAC minutes); ibid., 10 October 1941, (annexure to NAC minutes).

[158]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 15, 19.

[159]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 28, 89, 90.

[160]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 77, 92.

central to marriage and local ministers were identified to have themselves paid *lobola* at this time. Some local ministers even believed that certain Old Testament passages supported the practice.[161]

Probably the most significant factor which brought about this shift towards the accommodation of African values related to the rise of liberal, progressive and idealistic sentiments. Encapsulated in the growing related influences of African theology, theological liberalism and the Social Gospel in Langa, this helped to promote and reaffirm "positive" features of African religious and cultural traditions. By the mid-1940s, these socio-liberal and Africanist ideas had taken hold amongst a number of local *yokwenyani* clergy for a number of reasons. Firstly, again, with their large membership base and relatively secure foundations in the township, a number of respectable ministers felt confident enough to relax their strict codes of religious conduct to pursue more progressive forms of religious thought. Secondly, a new generation of *yokwenyani* ministers had emerged in Langa in the 1940s which refused to view their African customs in a wholly negative way. They were influenced by new African and religious assertions of identity, meaning and power that were promoted by liberal Social Christians and African politicians at national meetings of the Christian Council of South Africa and from within the ANC Youth League at this time. Having attended these national conferences and with some being sympathetic to developments within the ANC, the younger generation of Langa ministers appropriated this new socio-religious ideology by drawing upon African and Social Christian religious resources to develop an emerging African theology that was relevant to the remaking of African culture.

These new innovations in African theology and Social Christianity were already emerging amongst certain ministers in the late 1930s, which became especially clear in the changing ecclesiastical

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161 Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 92; Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", pp.117, 120.

attitudes to beer brewing in the township. At this time, local clergy, such as Rev. Citashe of the Ethiopian Church of South Africa and the now increasingly progressive Anglican priest, Rev. Savage, for example, argued for the retention of domestic brewing of kaffir beer, as being part of a sociable and amenable national custom, which was not necessarily sinful in the eyes of God.[162] These responses contrasted sharply with customary church support for prohibitionism and government restrictions on domestic brewing in the 1920s and early 1930s. Condemnatory attitudes towards African herbalists were also disappearing by the mid-1940s. Both Rev. Lediga and the Anglican ministers, for example, were relatively accepting of the successes of African medicine on the grounds of scientific support.[163] A number of the local black clergy even developed idealistic and permissive attitudes towards ancestral beliefs. Rev. Lediga, for example, argued for the retention of the ancestors as intermediaries towards the Christian God, whom he considered it presumptuous to approach directly. He even went so far as to argue for a distinction between good and evil witch doctors.[164]

Although the loose framework of an inherently African theology began to emerge amongst local clergy from the mid-1940s, it nevertheless lacked clear definition and substantial delineation, being thwarted by a host of glaring contradictions and ambiguities. Despite being a strong proponent of the ancestral cult, Rev. Lediga, for example, would in the same breath in 1955 decry the

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[162]Citashe's views are reflected in the Langa Advisory Board's statements against the municipalisation of beerhalls, which he avidly supported and played an important role in compiling. See 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 9 October 1938. For Savage's opinions, see Friedlander Papers, BC 580, Joint Council minutes, 7 June 1938.

[163]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 39; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Lediga, 1955.

[164]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Lediga, 1955; S.P. Lediga, "The Disciple of Christ Facing African Religions", Ministry, 1962.

"backward" and "uncivilised" state of his congregation.[165] Such antithetical attitudes were common amongst Langa ministers throughout the period under review. Throughout the late 1940s and even into the 1950s, mission *yokwenyani* church ideology therefore continued to be dominated by peculiarly western definitions and structures of society.

Most *yokwenyani* and *oozenzele* churches continued to stress piety, respectability and civility as central to their primary evangelistic and discipling objectives. Importantly, alongside this strong spiritual emphasis, local churches were now also increasingly compelled to focus their church activities on the purely religious aspects of their task as the National Party sought to curb socio-religious opposition in the 1950s. It has already been noted that the new government set about this by tightening leases, with the warning of termination on account of churches becoming involved in "subversive" activities outside of their prescribed sphere of interest. In one instance, the AME Church was threatened with closure in 1952 on the accusation of furthering the passive resistance movement by allowing the ANC to use its church building for weekly meetings. This underlines the degree of intimidation which obliged local churches to confine themselves to their purely religious activities.[166] Government restrictions alone, however, do not explain the churches' continuing pietistic focus, though they certainly contributed to the traditional religious direction of mission ideology in the 1950s. For most local churches, these political restrictions were secondary since their commitment to spirituality, loyalty to the state and respect for law and order remained fundamental tenets of mission *yokwenyani* ideology. A number of churches, most notably the BMC, DRC and (Bantu) Church of Christ, still explicitly prided themselves on their loyalty, and

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[165] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Lediga, 1955; ibid., box 21, article on split personalities.

[166] AWC 3/2 102, Rogers to the Native Commissioner, 11 December 1952. Notice that Rev. Seboloa initially responded to the allegation by saying that he had only consented to his church being used for the purpose of prayer meetings by the ANC and had himself opened the meeting in prayer before retiring. Following further accusations from Rogers that the ANC used the facility to engage in subversive activities,

non-political and purely religious nature.[167] Local ministers continued to align themselves with township authorities in their joint attendance at public functions and important religious occasions. With many of their Sotho adherents in the employment of the township administration, the DRC even organised a yearly service for the police force in Langa from the early 1950s.[168] There is also evidence that some clergy worked closely with officials in the event of disturbances in their churches in the 1950s. They were quick to seek the Superintendent's intervention in the hope that the police might be summoned to arrest dissenters. Although the Superintendent was reluctant to engage directly in church affairs, on certain occasions he was not unwilling to invoke the charge of law-enforcement officers, especially when a situation threatened the public order of the township.[169] As a result of such submission to township authorities, some Langa critics in the 1950s considered that the churches actually "belonged" to the government. Interestingly, at the same time, a number of "lower-class" workers actually argued that the local churches would continue the white system of rule if they were to gain political power.[170] Thus, despite undergoing a degree of indigenisation, mission *yokwenyani* church ideology, therefore, remained strongly connected to the predominant Eurocentric religious framework in the late 1940s and into the 1950s.

Seboloa apologised by indicating that he had been deceived by the intended nature of the gatherings and henceforth prevented the ANC from using the church amenities.

[167]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Tshazibana, 31 January 1956; ibid., interview with Rev. Scheffler, 1955; interview with Rev. Damane, 18 January 1956.

[168]SSK, S.5/2A/37, yearly report by Scheffler, 1952, p. 2.

[169]AWC 3/5 93, Ndzotyana to Manager of Native Administration, 28 May 1955; ibid., Ndzotyana affidavit, 25 March 1955. See also AWC 3/5 93, Ndibongo to Superintendent, 11 June 1946; AWC 3/25 99, Rogers to Snitcher, 5 October 1962.

[170]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, notes on independent churches.

1.5 The weakening of the western church ethic

For all this, by the mid-1940s, the relative degree of dominance, unity and stability established by the respectable mission-based church community in Langa, was already beginning to be undermined by a range of socio-cultural, religious and political pressures, stemming both from within the religious institutions themselves, and from external sources. From within, many churches, for the first time, were faced with problems of serious internal divisions and conflicts. Whereas local religious institutions and their ecclesiastical authorities had usually been accorded a great deal of respect and honour, and had to contend with little internal dissension during the 1930s and early 1940s, this comfortable state of affairs changed dramatically towards the mid-1940s. For reasons related to the insular, pietistic and apolitical functioning of the *yokwenyani* and *oozenzele* churches, combined with attitudes of religious discontent and growing politicisation, many churches were riven by internal conflicts by this time, which often involved in-fighting amongst their petty bourgeois leadership. By 1955, Rev. Maya of the EC of SA went so far as to conclude of the Langa churches with the following words of regret - "Our native churches . . . what a lot of nonsense".[171] These squabbles within, and domestic challenges to, the local churches, in many ways originated in the limitations of the moderate mission *yokwenyani* church ideology. This contradiction, at the same time, served to strike at the core of the dominant religious position.

By the mid-1940s, the ideals of spirituality, character and respectability had served to create high ambitions amongst the petty bourgeois and aspirant "school" working-class membership, who competed for the few positions of religious leadership and prominence as a token of their civilised aspirations. The earliest internal squabbles, from 1944 onwards, revealed this small-scale feuding

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[171] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Maya, 1955.

over the limited number of prestigious church positions. These tensions, fuelled by personality differences and ethnic factionalism, were particularly common in the smaller, independent churches but were also not unfamiliar in the respectable churches.[172] The Bantu Presbyterian Church (*icawe yokwenyani*) and the (Bantu) Church of Christ (*icawe oozenzele*) were, in particular, notoriously unstable and provide useful case examples in illuminating the general nature of domestic religious conflicts at this time. They also indicate the partial, but growing radical politicisation amongst "lower-class" urbanised and migrant working-class elements of the religious community, who were increasingly questioning the cosy consensus of the old guard ecclesiastical leadership. This religious criticism corresponded with the political shift towards communist and nationalist populist thinking in Langa, which was becoming strongly entrenched locally by the mid-to-late 1940s.

Beginning in 1944 and 1946 respectively, the disturbances within the Bantu Presbyterian and (Bantu) Church of Christ denominations lasted well into the 1950s. Although initially appearing petty and mild, the discord proved severe enough to lead to stand-up faction fights, which ended in bloodshed. This forced the closure of the church buildings at times and even resulted in legal action. By the mid-1940s, two opposing factions had emerged within the BPC petty bourgeois and "school" working-class leadership, each jostling for the key opportunities as elders and deacons. By 1946, the faction supporting the residing minister, Rev. Ndibongo, appeared to have gained the upperhand by ousting rival elders and deacons on the charges of embezzling church funds.[173] The former office-bearers, however, were not to take their excommunication lightly and, for the next ten

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[172]See Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, ch. 9 on "Discord"; ibid., interview with Rev. Lediga, 1955; ibid., box 6, Methodist Church field records; ibid., box 6, Presbyterian Church of Africa field records; ibid., interview with Rev. Maya, 1955; ibid., Ethiopian Church of South Africa field records, 1955; ibid., Assemblies of God field records, 1955; ibid., box 5, Africa Gospel Church field records; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 94; AWC 3/5 79, Bantu Presbyterian Church documents, 1946-1955; AWC 3/5 93, (Bantu) Church of Christ documents, 1946-1950; AWC 3/25 99, Full Gospel Church of God documents, 1962.

[173]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. Tiyo Soga Memorial Mission (TSMM), Ndibongo to Rev. Sikutshwa, 10 January 1946; AWC 3/5 79, Ndibongo to Langa Superintendent, 11 June 1946.

years, would agitate for their restoration to pre-eminence within the church. For the rest of 1946, the disaffected would attend Sunday services, despite their prohibition, and would seek to subvert the course of the meetings by interrupting Ndibongo. For example, during the delivery of his sermon, they would shout out personal accusations, which were accompanied by the use of coarse language and deliberate blasphemies.[174] Such crude and vulgar responses underlined the hypocrisy and hollow quest for prestige amongst certain urbanised petty bourgeois and working-class elements. It clarified the growing accusation that religious positions of authority were simply pursued for pragmatic, political and social reasons by the petty bourgeois elite and aspirant "school" working class. In this sense, their church ambitions were merely defined by the zealous striving for influence and privilege in the Langa community. Such aspirations, understood to function as a pattern of obligations attendant upon their status and class position in Langa, were of course commonly held and reflected across the board in local *yokwenyani* churches. Rev. Lediga, for example, even labelled his ardent and ambitious mainstream Presbyterian churchgoers as "uncouth", "status mad" and "intent on prestige".[175]

The (Bantu) Church of Christ underwent similar factional fission beginning in 1946. In this case, the disruptions primarily stemmed from a constitutional struggle related to issues of religious authority and control, that had begun in the mother church in New Brighton, Port Elizabeth. This had subsequently become the focus of a national power battle amongst the church leadership, spreading throughout the satellite congregations in South Africa and affecting even the local Langa branch.[176] Again, the nature of the conflict revealed the self-serving and pragmatic ambitions of the

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[174]AWC 3/5 79, Ndibongo to Langa Superintendent, 11 June 1946; Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, Ndibongo to Rev. Hliso, 26 November 1946.

[175]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Lediga, 1955.

[176]See G. Baines, " 'In the World but not of it' ", pp. 132, 133; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Damane, 18 January 1956.

aspiring church leaders. The upheavals reached their height in the late 1940s in both the case of the BPC and (Bantu) Church of Christ, when criminal actions of violence were committed within the walls of the churches.

In October 1947, purporting to follow the righteous example of the unjustly treated donkey of Numbers chapter 22, which eventually took assertive action and spoke against Balaam,[177] the alienated former Bantu Presbyterian church leaders forcibly took control of the Deacons' Court and ousted Ndibongo from his dominating position. Under the new leadership of self-styled elders, Ncanisa, A. Xhelo, R. Ndingane, Nimrod Jwayi, Samuel Cuba and Mdladlana, power was assumed, significantly, over the pulpit and the church's financial affairs. Ndibongo himself was accused of mismanaging funds and, consequently, deprived of any form of stipend payment.[178] Ndibongo's supporters appealed for the intervention of the General Assembly of the BPC - a move which would only fuel the factional spirit of animosity and antagonism.[179] Members of the General Assembly sent to negotiate with a view to restoring amicable relations within the Langa church, proved to be incompetent arbitrators by practising favouritism and shifting their allegiances indiscriminately. One of the representatives of the General Assembly, Rev. Gasa, for example, initially appeared to favour Ndibongo as the recognised source of religious authority and went so far as to request the Native Commissioner at the Salt River offices to arrest the leading members of the opposing faction.[180] Later, a personality clash with Ndibongo served to swing his views in

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[177]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, untitled document, 11 October 1947.

[178]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, untitled documents, 11 October 1947 and 12 October 1947.

[179]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, petition to the General Assembly, undated.

[180]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, Rev. Gasa request, undated.

favour of the disaffected.[181] By 1948, little had been resolved. Although Ndibongo would be restored to his position, both factions continued to contend for the dominant religious positions.

Matters reached catharsis between the two polarised groups in October 1948, with a confrontational incident resulting in bloodshed, wreaking havoc within the church. Reportedly armed with butcher's knives, sjamboks and sticks, the estranged element appear to have been intent on assaulting Ndibongo at the regular Sunday service, which ended in a general mêlée within the congregation. Ndibongo responded by summoning the police to restore order and maintain peace within the church. Soon afterwards, the General Assembly ordered the closure of the church whilst civil action was pending over the incident.[182] The courts ruled in favour of Ndibongo's faction and accused the disaffected elements of inciting the congregation.[183] Despite this setback, the dissenting group continued to agitate for religious power within the church for the next three years. By the middle of 1950, the former elders and deacons had regrouped and were threatening once more to take over the leadership of the church and its services at the expense of Ndibongo. Again the church was forced to close its doors.[184] Eventually, in 1951, the General Assembly instructed that Ndibongo be transferred to the Miller Mission in Elliotdale as a solution to the local upheavals.[185] Matters remained unresolved, though, as the religious aspirations of the dissenters were as yet unfulfilled. As late as 1955, the new minister, Rev. Ndzotyana, had still to contend with the

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[181] Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, report on meeting of Rev. Gasa, Rev Ndibongo, elders and deacons, 26 December 1947.

[182] For the nature of the 1948 incident, see: Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, document entitled "Cape Town matters", undated; ibid., Ndibongo to Rev. Nzimande, 3 November 1948; AWC 3/5 79, Mafu to Langa Manager, 11 August 1948.

[183] Cape Argus, 12 May 1949; Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, summons for case no. 109 of 1948.

[184] AWC 3/5 79, Rogers to Mrs. Ndibongo, 29 June 1950; ibid., Ndibongo to Rogers, 19 July 1950.

[185] AWC 3/5 79, General Assembly resolution, 3 October 1951; ibid., T.V. Magodla to Superintendent, 5 December 1951.

disturbances and challenges from those, like Nimrod Jwayi, who had been excommunicated in the late 1940s. Ndzotyana would even obtain the services of local policemen to be present in uniform at his services to ensure the subordination and quiescence of such dissentients.[186]

Similar acts of bloodshed rocked the (Bantu) Church of Christ in 1950 when the factional dissension, ongoing since 1946, erupted in a stand-up brawl during a Sunday service. Having also taken decisive steps against the ambitions of the fissionaries, again on the allegation of mismanaging church funds, the incumbent minister, Rev. Damane, had similarly to face strong resistance to his religious authority. Although reaching its peak in 1950, the factional conflict would continue to plague the local congregation well into the 1950s.[187] Having formerly been officially lauded as an "anti-crime sanctuary" and even as an asset to the authorities in the early 1940s, the church now fell into serious disrepute with township officials in a matter of a few years and, as a result, would be firmly denied official recognition throughout the 1950s.[188]

Although petty feuding, personality splits and accusations of ambitions of prestige and respectability tended to form the basis of internal church squabbles, growing criticisms of the western church ethic and its inherent moralism, heightened by political alienation and awareness, also served to underline the deepening domestic polarisation. Such challenges to the dominant Europeanised middle-class religious ideology were sharply exposed in the questioning of local clergy as the staunch upholders of spirituality, civilisation and respectability, in whom religious

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[186]AWC 3/5 79, affidavit for the expulsion of N. Jwayi, 25 March 1955; ibid., Rev. Ndzotyana to Manager of Native Administration, 28 May 1955.

[187]AWC 3/5 79, Bantu Presbyterian Church documents, 1946-1950.

[188]AWC 3/5 79, Rogers to Native Commissioner, 20 February 1942; ibid., Cradock Location Superintendent to Rogers, 20 September 1945; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Damane, 18 January 1956.

authority presided. Again, the conflict within the volatile (Bantu) Church of Christ and BPC served as examples where allegations of ministers' hypocrisy, heavy-handedness and aloofness functioned to undermine the leading position of the clergy, who previously tended to be viewed as standing beyond criticism.

The sanctity of the minister's role and the respect previously offered to him on the basis of his appointment in the early 1940s, was shattered in Ndibongo's case when disaffected elements made direct accusations from the mid-1940s onwards, about his dictatorial style, prejudicial attitudes, arrogant manner and narrow moralism. Such indictments were not without some justification. Ndibongo appears to have acted imperiously and indiscriminately in the excommunication of certain members of the Church Council by simply deposing those who stood against him and questioned his authority.[189] He was further prone to bolster his authority by denying church officers access to the pulpit. Elders and deacons were forced to speak from the aisle on account of - in Ndibongo's terms - not possessing certificates of proficiency in preaching by not having received training as licensed preachers, as he had at Fort Hare. Such monopolisation of the pulpit earned Ndibongo the reputation of reducing this religious position into "an idol sacred only to one person".[190] In addition, Ndibongo was not unused to taking advantage of the lectern as a platform of authority to denigrate the character of his opponents. In 1948 he was even accused of labelling the dissenters as "Red-Kaffirs and drunkards", in an attempt to see them removed from the congregation.[191] Rev. Damane, too, exploited the use of the pulpit to denigrate the opposing group within the (Bantu) Church of Christ. In 1946, for example, he caused a stir during his preaching when he charged Albert Jack with misleading the congregation by representing him as "a wizard,

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[189]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, Mafu, Cuba and Jwayi to Session Clerk, 28 July 1945.

[190]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, Mafu, Cuba and Jwayi to Session Clerk, 28 July 1945.

[191]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, Ndibongo to Rev. Nzimande, 3 November 1948.

with big ears like those of a pig from the fields".[192] These facetious remarks reflected the superior class attitudes of Ndibongo and Damane, who sought to stigmatise their detractors as being "low class", "uncouth", "uncivilised" and "backward" rural traditionalists. These references were vigorously challenged by the disaffected as a personal affront to their stature.

Ndibongo's spiritualisation of contending issues, as well as his uncompromising and insensitive moralism, was also deeply resented by the opposing faction. The disaffected were especially critical of Ndibongo's manipulation of religious discourse, whereby they were represented as "evil-doers", who had "brought reproach to God's work" by instigating an era of "spiritual depression within the church". This, in their view, only served to create formal barriers between the two factions, preventing any recourse to reconciliation.[193] Ndibongo's high and self-righteous moralism was also taken to task by the dissenting elders and deacons, when he was reproached for a "vulgar, unchristian-like and bitter-tongued" sermon in 1945. Criticising his personal insensitivity which originated in Ndibongo's excessive disgust for "unequally-yoked" marriages and adultery, the opposing faction attacked Ndibongo's chastisement of mothers, who brought their children for baptism, but whose husbands were not religious individuals, as well as his denunciation of those women who brought illegitimate babies for baptism on behalf of their daughters.[194]

Other ministers suffered similar derision in the 1940s and 1950s as their hypocritical standards and religious prejudices were exposed. Rev. Sihlali of the Congregational Church, for example, earned himself a poor reputation from his congregation in the 1940s, when, although preaching high

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[192]AWC 3/5 93, Albert Jack to Rogers, 7 June 1946. See also the example of Rev. Ndzazo of the Full Gospel Church: AWC 3/25 99, Rogers to Snitcher, Cohen and Snitcher, 5 October 1962.

[193]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, Mafu, Cuba and Jwayi to Session Clerk, 28 July 1945; ibid., Ndibongo to Rev. Sikutshwa, 10 January 1946.

[194]Ndibongo Collection, AAS 122, B.8.1.2. TSMM, Mafu, Cuba and Jwayi to Session Clerk, 28 July 1945.

family values and ideals, he was understood to treat his own offspring shamefully. He went on to lose all respect when, having been arrested for contempt of court after failing to pay his rent, he subsequently blamed the affair on his church members for not funding him fully enough. This was despite the fact that the congregation was known to contribute generously to his income. Significantly, the policeman sent to arrest Sihlali had arrived secretly in the evening so that the minister's reputation might be kept intact.[195] The double standards of the Reverends Mvambo and Ncobo were also placed under close scrutiny during this period. Rev. Mvambo, for example, was heavily criticised for taking no action against church members who paid well, and also for allowing them to conceal their sins of adultery. Considering that the amount of his stipend was dependent upon the size and wealth of his church membership, Mvambo was not willing to take strong measures for fear of losing members.[196] Rev. Ngcobo of the Africa Gospel Church was also highly resented as a Zulu, who refused to take strong disciplinary action against fellow Zulu church members, and who tended to favour them ethnically for the leading positions in the church hierarchy. This was expressly revealed when Ngcobo refused to take action against Ephraim Ntuli on the basis of ethnic favouritism, despite some serious allegations of blasphemy, and also when he deposed non-Zulu members of the executive by irregular procedures.[197]

There is little first-hand evidence to suggest that these growing criticisms of the clergy and their staunch defenders emerged as a direct response to the developing anti-Christian, political rhetoric

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[195]For the downfall of Rev. Sihlali and the disclosure of his hypocrisy, see Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14404, notes, 4 October 1940. Notice that the informant here was Sihlali's daughter, who was very bitter against her own father.

[196]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14404, notes, December 1941; Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", p. 76.

[197]AWC 3/2 98, Africa Gospel Church document, 18 August 1958. For further criticisms of religious leaders' double standards, see R1/1 Circle of Langa, report of deacon's adultery, 1953. Rev. J. Ndaliso of the AUNBC even appeared in the Wynberg magistrate's court on the allegation of robbery. See Cape Times, 5 May 1955.

of the period. Nevertheless, there are indications that the religious accusations originating in the churches themselves in the 1940s and 1950s were influenced by the rise of more progressive, even "non-collaborationist" political forces in Langa. For example, dissenters within the BPC appear to have been partially motivated by growing political radicalisation in the 1940s and 1950s. Although not making explicit use of communist, anti-Christian or non-collaborationist terminology, they directed their opposition against imperious and hierarchical church structures, partly inspired by the growing ideological hold of new populist and progressive movements in Langa. As an indication of the extent of their politicisation and of growing anti-western attitudes, it is significant to note that a number of the BPC antagonists, having been completely ostracised from the church by the end of the 1950s, became ardent supporters of the PAC and Poqo movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s respectively. By this time, as alienated former church members and in alignment with PAC and Poqo ideology, they were rejecting the hypocrisy of "white" Christianity out of hand, and were instead looking towards African religious resources, the ancestral spirits, and an immediate apocalyptic event for salvation.[198] At the same time, typical of the contradictory affiliations of the period, some, by contrast, like A. Xhelo, were still aligned with conservative political forces, at the time by being represented on the moderate breakaway LVA in the mid-1940s.[199] For them, radical political ideas do not appear to have substantially motivated their church opposition. It would be incorrect to overemphasise political factors, given such complexities.

In the case of the (Bantu) Church of Christ conflict, the influence of leftist notions is even more unclear and ambiguous. On the one hand, it would appear not coincidental that at the same time that Langa was falling under the sway of growing communist and populist thinking, the local Church of Christ branch was experiencing an intense struggle for the democratisation of its church structures.

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[198]AWC 3/5 79, document by Rev. Matyumza, undated.

[199]Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, A 24.545, 15 March 1944.

That the church had members with close connections with the now communist-influenced LVA might well have heightened a growing awareness of "left-wing" sentiments amongst dissenters who, at the same time, were becoming alienated by the strongly centralist and dictatorial control of "Bishop" Limba at the national level and Rev. Damane locally. Yet, on the other hand, it was Rev. Damane and his supporters who were, in fact, represented on this LVA. This emerged as a consequence of the church's historically close association with the local Vigilance Association. Since the early 1940s, the Cape Church of Christ congregation had been encouraged by Limba to rally behind the conservative Chairman, Bell Ntshinga, who was known to favour the representation of Church of Christ members on his Vigilance Committee. By the mid-1940s, Ntshinga had become a CPSA member, though the (Bantu) Church of Christ continued to support him - not so much for his political affiliation, as in continuity with the previous campaigns for him as an individual who had ensured that Church of Christ backing was duly rewarded with the election of Church of Christ office-bearers to his Vigilance Committee.[200] This again displays the inconsistencies of allegiance, at a time when patronage and clientelism were still rife, which make it difficult to assess the depth of political influence. To compound the matter, as one of the leading dissentients, Albert Jack was represented on the ultra-conservative, breakaway LVA in the 1950s.[201] This may suggest that much internal feuding was more about ambitions for church and civic leadership and prestige, since the two positions were clearly closely tied in the case of the (Bantu) Church of Christ. In his study of Limba's church in New Brighton, Port Elizabeth, Baines argues that the dispute was primarily the result of an internal power struggle, with little communist or other external influences. He suggests too, that there was no evidence of communist agitation in

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[200]Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 15 March 1944; ibid., Langa Vigilance Association document, 1941; Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, notes, 12 March 1940; AWC 3/72 44, Lwana to Rogers, 8 February 1945; ibid., Citashe to Rogers, 18 February 1944.

[201]AWC 3/72 44, A. Jack to Town Clerk, 10 February 1955.

the Cape Town situation.[202] This would appear feasible, though it is perhaps inaccurate to completely rule out at least an indirect influence.

Indeed, it is likely that a range of socio-religious and political factors accounted for congregational dissatisfaction with ministers and church hierarchies in the late 1940s and 1950s. Wilson has argued forcefully that the fundamental cause, common to most criticism stemming from within the churches, related to the overall identification of ministers with the western ethic and, in the case of the mission churches, their white overseers. She suggested that in the context of growing political alienation in the 1950s, the normal aggression and frustration of church members could find no outlet against an all-powerful ruling white administration, so that such feelings of anger turned inwards. Since the local African minister was the indirect link with a dominant white power and ethic, he was placed under increasing strain.[203] Moreover, the fact that local mission clergy were quick to appeal to their white superiors for aid in weakening and silencing the opposition against them when complaints were laid, served to highlight this link with white authority. Church Board members of the Dutch Reformed Church, for example, became so enraged at the persistent collusion of their minister with the national and regional white ecclesiastical authorities that they withdrew their funding for the administration of the church in 1962. For the first time in over twenty years of its existence in Langa, the church was unable to meet its budget.[204] Close clerical relations with the local township authorities and various appeals for police protection of their churches further functioned to lay ministers open to claims of government connivance from some increasingly politicised segments of congregations.

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[202]Baines, " 'In the World but not of it' " , p. 133.

[203]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, ch. 9 on "Discord", p. 5.

[204]SSK, S.5/2A/37, year report by Scheffler, 1962, p.1. See also AWC 3/25 99, Full Gospel Church of God document, 1962.

By the 1950s then, a large cross-section of congregational members were becoming disillusioned with their church experience. Many "school" migrant workers were deeply critical of the observed shenanigans of the petty bourgeois leadership. They had become increasingly alienated by the ideal of respectability, due to its inability to solve the growing socio-economic and political problems and restrictions of the 1950s and due to its remoteness from their harsh material experience within Langa. Increasingly, many "school" workers were questioning whether their church experience offered worthwhile social compensations. The theoretical abstractions and dogmatics of western-styled, esoteric theology seemed removed from their dire everyday living conditions, and appeared to mean subordination and the concealment of social tensions. Perhaps reluctantly, a number of "school" migrants in the 1950s, along with the more traditionally-orientated *amaqaba* from the barracks, were asking the searching question - "what have those who go to church gained - how much better are they?"[205] Appreciatively, fewer "school" migrants were being attracted to the churches in the 1950s. Some workers cited the lack of pastoral visitation as a reason for their indifference to church participation. The fact, previously alluded to, that most parishes included a number of smaller outstations meant that ministers often had little, if any, contact with their local parishioners in Langa, especially in the case of the migrant workers, who were not considered to be core church supporters.[206]

The younger churchgoing generation, too, revealed telling signs of religious disenchantment in the 1950s. The primary concerns for parent-child relations, piety, emotionalism and other-worldliness of the older, less educated "school" generation were increasingly questioned by young adults. Fashionable youth from urbanised, working-class families (defined by Wilson and Mafeje as

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[205]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, paper on "The Langa Churches" by Mafeje.

[206]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 102.

stemming from the *ikhaba* and *ooMac* social groups) were especially critical of young men's and women's *manyanos*, which they considered were only fit for the elderly and respectable *amatopi* and *amatopikazi* social groups.[207] *Ikhaba* girls were particularly scathing of young women's *manyanos*, which despite their quest for civility, were derided, ironically, as "*imurikazi*" (derived from the *mense taal* slang "*Moogie*", meaning a country bumpkin – a person very much behind the times). In this way, by failing to view the *manyanos* as "civilised", the grand notion of "civilisation" connected with the churches was being overturned generationally.[208] As a result, it was becoming increasingly difficult to attract Langa youth to church functions as they became involved in a range of alternative forms of leisure activities by then available to them, in contrast to the limited options during the previous two decades. By this time, the dominance of church activities in Langa had become undermined by the proliferation of a variety of alternate activities. Many of these new social clubs, music groups and political organisations - sometimes in direct opposition to the middle-class-orientated tradition - thus replaced the wider social functions of the churches and, particularly, drew the younger generation away from the churches.[209] Sunday services were, especially, not as frequently patronised and appear to have lost the notion of sanctity

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[207]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje papers, p. 75. Notice that the *ikhaba*, *amatopi* and *amatopikazi* social groups refer to socio-anthropological categories defined by Wilson and Mafeje in their study on Langa. Although these categories are vague conceptually and statistically, they are useful in determining the distinctive sub-sections of Langa's broader population. Accordingly, the *ooMac* and *ikhaba* social groups have been described as the urbanised, working class element with homes in town. The *ikhaba* have been identified as the younger age-set from 15 to about 25 years, who tended to be "irresponsible' and "wild". Generally, they had completed their primary schooling, but did not take their education further, and instead sought jobs in factories at an early age. The *ooMac* were the older age-set from about 25 to 35 years. They were considered more reasonable and responsible than the *ikhaba*, though they were still known to be boisterous. They also found employment as factory workers. Wilson and Mafeje noted that there was a tendency for both the *ooMac* and *ikhaba* to deride Christianity. The *amatopi* and their wives, the *amatopikazi*, have been depicted as the urbanised, middle-aged and elderly type, who, although less well educated than the *ooscuse-me*, were still respectable. They tended to run small businesses, were churchgoers and associated with the *ooscuse-me*. See Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp.23-29.

[208]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje papers, p.75.

[209]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 102; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, paper on "The Langa Churches" by Mafeje.

amongst a number of the youth by the 1950s. Partly, the decision by the CC in 1948 to open sports fields in Langa on Sundays distracted the youth from services.[210] In addition, the example of white residents playing golf at Mowbray, as well as attending Peninsula beaches on Sundays, brought searching questions about the status of the Holy Day amongst the younger generation.[211] Many of them cited these practices as justification for their non-observance of the Sabbath. By the 1950s, many younger people were even avoiding marriage ceremonies within the churches. Church marriages decreased appreciably at this time, as the younger generation showed a distinct preference to marry by civil rites. In this way, the young couples escaped the indignity and embarrassment of a cross-examination by the minister as to their pre-marital sexual activities.[212]

Even within the staunch petty bourgeois membership, amongst whom the moral Christian code penetrated furthest, intimations of disillusionment with the churches were evident by the late 1940s and early 1950s. The crude nature of in-fighting had taken its toll, so that certain of the Christian elite became more sceptical of church authority. The contradiction between the idealistic goals of the western Christian ethic and its practice became only too apparent for some who developed cynical church attitudes. *Manyanos*, for example, were bitterly criticised for their hypocrisy by allowing private confessions to become township gossip.[213] Such flouting of confidentiality led some of the elite actually to terminate their church membership. Criticisms also abounded with regard to the "immoral" practices of white middle-class Christians in Cape Town - the fundamental

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[210]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 100. Notice that this decision was repealed by 1951 to allow for the implementation of the new Sunday Observance Act, devised by the NP, which came to be enforced by the police in Langa. Although the Act had the intention of reclaiming the Christian sanctity of Sundays, it did not generally serve to change the attitudes of Langa youth about the observance of the Sabbath. See Cape Times, 22 September 1951.

[211]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 98.

[212]Levin, "Marriage in Langa Native Location", pp. 89, 90, 95.

[213]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14404, notes, December 1941.

reference group of the African church elite in Langa - which brought further disenchantment, confusion and doubt about the viability of mission *yokwenyani* ideology. Whereas the European conception of monogamous marriage had, for example, at first appeared indestructible, its instability was being exposed as the white divorce rate climbed in the 1950s, which brought consequent disillusionment with such relations.[214] Furthermore, the fact that white Christians were seen to smoke placed doubt about the taboos on African smoking. Comments were also made about the fact that African Christians in the past were prevented from painting their faces and were forced to cover their bodies and breasts, whereas white Christian women were observed to be using lipstick and powders, and were wearing sleeveless shirts and V-necks.[215] In many ways, moralism and the ideals of respectability were therefore beginning to be questioned by some of the leading patrons of the *yokwenyani* churches. Possibly most crucial to the process of despondency was the fact that the hope of a reasonable and integrated South African Christian order had begun to fade. In the context of National Party segregationist rule in the 1950s, the promises of eventual racial equality, so central to *yokwenyani* ideology, were proving bankrupt. Once more, the disparities between western Christian idealism and its practice underlined its ideology's growing weakness.

Throughout the 1950s, churches in Langa declined in influence as a cross-section of congregational members lost faith in them. Although church membership figures remained reasonably high, with the relative percentage of professing Christians in the township only decreasing slightly (in relation to the large influx of "bachelor" workers from the mid-1950s) and despite the fact that churches continued to function as one of the dominant forms of association in Langa,[216] the religious fervour, activity and zeal of the 1930s was by no means as evident in the changing socio-political situation

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[214]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 16; Levin "Marriage in Langa Native Location", p. 83.

[215]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14404, untitled document, 1941.

[216]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 91-93.

of the 1950s. Few converts were made as revival services lost their successes of past decades and became much more limited in frequency.[217]Apart from the Methodist meetings, Sunday services were in general also not as well attended.[218]

By the 1950s, even the relative ecumenical unity that had existed in accord with the western church ethic was breaking. Tensions, for example, began to surface within the respectable Ministers' Association. After a series of disagreements with non-conformist churches, the very influential Anglican denomination, together with the Roman Catholics, broke off their relations with the Ministers' Association in the early 1950s. Owing to the growing strength and demands of non-conformist representatives on the MA, the two formerly instrumental churches came to view non-conformism as "intolerable" and increasingly disapproved of interdenominational activities. They tended rather towards exclusiveness, preferring to work together on projects alone.[219] In this way, both churches lost the religious leverage and ascendancy they had commanded in the 1930s and 1940s. They became viewed with suspicion, and were criticised for their condescension over and denigration of the free, non-conformist churches.[220] In response, the Roman Catholic Church came under a particularly scathing and hostile attack from the AME Church for keeping their members shackled in a "backward" and "semi-heathen" state by countenancing polygany, working through ethnic chiefs and approving of certain features of "tribalism". The denomination also criticised the Catholic practices of confession and absolutism from sin, which, it believed, resulted in the

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[217]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 13.

[218]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 100.

[219]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Roman Catholic Mission field records, 1955; ibid., Anglican Church field records, 1955.

[220]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Lukuko, 25 January 1956.

formation of "weak" characters.[221] Part of the emerging dissension between mission and independent, conformist and non-conformist churches related to the recruitment of members from each other's congregations - a practice that had already started to cause tension between churches in the 1930s. With the failure of revival services and the conversion of few new proselytes, churches now turned towards enticing whole groups from rival religious institutions in the late 1940s and 1950s. The BPC, for example, was accused of "stealing" large numbers of members from the Presbyterian Church, as was the Ethiopian Church of Africa, which was singled out for such "reprehensible" behaviour by its aggrieved mission-based rivals. The DRC, too, as the Sotho-based church, was chastised for secretly manoeuvring specifically Sotho members away from the Methodist Church and RCC to its own congregation. Similarly, when the African Ethiopian Baptist Church split from the African Native Mission Church in 1946, it tended to focus its recruitment on dissatisfied members of the ANMC.[222]

Anti-white and anti-British attitudes were also the cause of growing divisions between mission and independent, conformist and non-conformist churches in the 1940s and 1950s. Although such criticisms had been tentatively voiced by a minority of *oozenzele* churches from as early as the 1920s in Ndabeni, opposition was spreading increasingly anti-establishment amongst the local churches. Many of the independent churches, especially, understood that they should no longer look to "the whites" or to England for their salvation. Certain women's *manyano* groups were known to be praying actively against churches, such as the Anglican denomination, in which King George VI and later Queen Elizabeth II were symbolically central. By the 1950s, the *oozenzele* churches had

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[221] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, AME Church field records, 1955. Rev. Wesinyane voiced these criticisms despite the fact that his church was known itself to be lenient towards the practice of polygany and did not prevent adherents from attending welcoming receptions for chiefs.

[222] Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 22, 83; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rogers, 19 August 1955; ibid., DRC field records, 1955; ibid., African Ethiopian Baptist Church field records, 10 January 1956.

even created their own ministers' and ministers' wives associations, parallel to the respectable organisations, in defiance of established western norms and white religious authority. This formation of separate religious groupings was, essentially, motivated by widening suspicions of the inherent white domination within many of the respectable churches.[223]

A number of new religious communities also emerged in the 1950s to weaken the hold of the middle-class religious tradition further and challenge the prevailing religious unity. Their distinctive teachings and group identity contrasted sharply with the established religious norms. These involved the entirely autonomous Zionist groups, which were steeped in traditional African culture and drew adherence mainly from poor and rural migrant workers in Langa. The first Zionist groupings emerged in Langa from the mid-1950s onwards, which corresponded with the official introduction of thousands of "bachelor" migrants into the township, which in itself changed the urban petty bourgeois character of the community in a very distinct fashion. The Medium Zionist Church was established in 1956, meeting in the north barracks, with only a handful of members initially. During 1958 and 1959 the group underwent three divisions as a result of personality splits and administrative problems. Consequently, the Kanana Zionist Movement, the Spiritual Zionist Church and the Holy Apostolic Church were founded.[224] By the early 1960s, the Zionist groupings had consolidated their position sufficiently to be able to hold public open-air services in Langa which received growing support.[225]

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[223]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, African Ethiopian Baptist Church field records.

[224]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 99; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje papers on the Zionist Churches, p. 11.

[225]Cape Times, 4 December 1961; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, p. 138.

In their own way, these churches offered an alternative to the white-orientated, middle-class religious orthodoxy in Langa. Essentially, they were Pentecostal and Apostolic breakaways, which stressed the working of the Holy Spirit and divine healing, and also sought a synthesis of both African and European cultural traditions. They were a peasant movement, drawing from the poor, illiterate and semi-literate rural element of the migrant working class. Thus, compared with the urban, "school" and aspirant bourgeois character of the respectable churches in Langa, the emerging groups were distinctly rural with a strong labour migrant composition, mainly of males, which sought to cater for their distinctive needs. Still, given their recent establishment in the Cape, compared to their longer history in the Transvaal and Natal, the autonomous groups generally remained small in size, and did not fundamentally threaten the declining, yet still leading role of the *yokwenyani* churches. Furthermore, despite their distinction from the established *yokwenyani* norms at the same time the Zionist groupings also remained products of the western framework by failing to make a fundamental epistemological and ideological break from the distinctly European paradigm. In essence, they functioned as apolitical religious movements, preferring to distance themselves from the radical political environment, as they sought to establish a separate and sacred order where they could serve as religious bearers of the spirit.[226]

By 1960, then, the western ethic of the respectable churches was clearly under growing strain from a range of internal sources, emanating from both within and between the religious institutions themselves. The most vehement opposition, however, stemmed from those outside the churches, who had fewer and fewer inhibitions about rejecting "sacred" institutions. From the late 1940s onwards, Langa churches came under scathing attacks from a number of emerging Trotskyist and Africanist groupings, whose antagonism revolved around a combination of religious, racial, class

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[226]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje papers on the Zionist Churches, p. 11; Mafeje, "Religion Class and Ideology in South Africa", pp. 174, 175.

and political considerations. By offering new socio-political and religious paradigms for freedom, they challenged the pervasive grip of the western church ethic and were able to mobilise church opposition from a growing number of Langa residents, including many anti-church youths, disillusioned church members, urbanised elements from the *ikhaba* and *ooMac* social groups, rural migrant workers and semi-urbanised segments of the *iibari* social group.[227]

Until the late 1940s, Langa churches had had to contend with little external resistance from a range of civic, cultural and nationalist organisations. Rather, in terms of their Social Gospel programmes and interests, local *yokwenyani* ministers were actively supported by the dominant petty bourgeoisie in contributing towards the relatively conservative, and, at times, progressive, course of socio-political movements in Langa.[228] However, in the context of more radical opposition to increasingly harsh and restrictive post-1948 segregationist legislation, local churches had to face the growing wrath and incitement of highly politicised radical political organisations, such as the ultra-left NEUM, militant elements within the ANC, and, later, towards 1960, the anti-liberal PAC. These political groups struck at the core of the political subordination of Social Christianity in Langa. The Trotskyist and non-collaborationist NEUM was the first political grouping to provide a critical exposé of Langa churches' ideological captivity to the capitalist, settler order of the day. Towards the end of the 1940s, as part of a broader campaign to denigrate "dummy" institutions and

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[227]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, paper on "The Langa Churches" by Mafeje, p. 9; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 101, 102. The *iibari* social group refers to another socio-anthropological type identified by Wilson and Mafeje. The *iibari* have been depicted as the semi-urbanised, working class element, which resided in the flats. With some education, they aspired to become townsmen, usually hoping to become absorbed into the *ooMac* group, but sometimes also into the *ooscuse-me* group. They were known to be flashy young men and generally not churchgoers. See Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 21, 22.

[228]See ch. 3 (3.1 and 3.2) for a more detailed discussion.

"sham" organisations within Langa, local churches were ruthlessly censured for their liberal and Christian trusteeship leanings.[229] Throughout the 1950s, the NEUM maintained its stinging attack on church practices through its mouthpiece, Torch, often branding local ministers, in particular the Reverends Xibenye, Mbizela, Mbete and Lediga, as "quisling collaborationists" for their accommodationist tendencies in supporting official initiatives of the township authorities.[230]

Simultaneously, Africanists who emerged within the ANC's Langa New Flats branches also intensified their attacks against local churches' perpetuation of western Christianity, as a necessary corollary to their radical nationalistic beliefs. As part of a broader rejection of the multi-racialism of the ANC (Western Province) and its association with white liberal and church organisations, this Africanist wing, like the NEUM, opposed "sham" and "dummy" institutions, such as the respectable churches.[231] Their intensified strategies of ideological struggle gained clarity in the late 1950s in the ideological objectives of the newly-constituted PAC, with which the local Africanist branches within the ANC developed close relations and to which they later seceded in 1959.[232] Similar to the inherent Africanism of the ANC's Langa New Flats branches, the PAC, too, set itself in opposition to the political conservatism and mission-based liberalism of local *yokwenyani* churches towards the end of the 1950s. The regional leadership in the Cape based its distinctive vision of African liberation upon racial exclusivity and traditional African heritage, which included a commitment to a variety of African religious symbols, myths and traditions.[233]

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[229]Torch, 29 December 1949.

[230]Torch, 18 March 1952 and 15 January 1957.

[231]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 360.

[232]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 378.

[233]T.G. Lodge, "Insurrectionism in South Africa: The Pan-Africanist Congress and the Poqo Movement, 1959-1965", (University of York, Ph.D. thesis, 1984), p. 151; G.M. Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa:

Especially during the 1950s, Langa churches, therefore, faced an intensification of opposition, ensuing from the combined anti-western and anti-collaborationist rhetoric of local Trotskyist and Africanist groupings. Increasingly, severe signs of polarisation were developing between the religious institutions and their detractors. Fundamentally, serious divisions and disputes were hardening relations between the "decent" Christian elite and the increasingly politicised, semi-urbanised and rural migrant element, which would erupt in the form of active acts of aggression against the *yokwenyani* churches. Thus, in the context of radical opposition to the commemorative Van Riebeeck Celebrations and the proposed segregationist Bantu Education laws, militant supporters of the more extreme political groupings attempted to set fire to some of the local mainstream church buildings in 1952. Churches were, reportedly, targeted by the extremists as being among the principal obstacles to their plans for fomenting disorder.[234] In particular, the DRC was singled out for its avid support of Bantu Education proposals and other National Party segregationist policies. These arson attempts certainly precipitated a period of more drastic action against the moderate religious institutions and customs of the Christian elite. In 1955, the overtly pietistic and evangelistic mission approach, pursued by *yokwenyani* churches for so many years, came under direct attack when the Salvation Army was forced to abandon a rally at the "bachelor" flats. Confronted by an angry mob of male "bachelor" workers, who adopted vigorous threats and gestures, the mission team had to make a hurried retreat. The remonstrative group partly protested against the presence of white members within the Army's musical band, but broader objections to the exploitative role of "white" Christianity were almost certainly part of the vocabulary.[235] This would run with similar accusations made at the same time, whereby respectable ministers in Langa

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The Evolution of an Ideology, (Berkley, University of California Press, 1978), p. 203; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, p. 242.

[234]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, ch. 10 on "Harmony".

[235]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, Salvation Army field records, p. 127.

were being described by radicals as "shrewd businessmen who live off the blood of poor widows" in the service of whites.[236] Evangelists from the DRC, too, were taken to task in the 1950s in the context of strong general antipathy towards the denomination. In direct verbal assaults, anti-church radicals chastised the evangelists for serving the God of the Boers and belonging to the "enemy", the "Malan" church. Xhosa workers, even some with mission church affiliations, were especially antagonistic towards the local DRC and its evangelical team for its Sotho mission bias, so that ethnic rivalries, as well as political differences, were at the root of this conflict.[237] On more than one occasion, whites in the mission groups were targeted and hounded out of the township by "rowdy" elements. For instance, early in 1960 a white group of Dutch Reformed student mission helpers from Stellenbosch University was compelled to disband its evangelistic work as it was chased out of the township by a hostile crowd of "bachelor" workers. Although the visits by the Stellenbosch students had become a regular occurrence in the township, having entered Langa for the previous two decades to sell Bibles on Sundays, it would appear that anti-white and anti-Christian attitudes had become so widespread so as not to endear the youthful student visitors to many residents of the flats and barracks in particular.[238]

By 1960, polarisation between the elitist churchgoer and the non-church, even anti-church element had reached critical proportions. Indeed, apart from the role of broader repressive socio-economic and political forces within the Peninsula, local *yokwenyani* churches were also partly responsible for contributing to the degree of stratification within the Langa community by setting apart the respectable and "school" church members from the "lower-class" urbanised workers and the "red

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[236]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, paper on "The Langa Churches" by Mafeje, p. 9.

[237]R1/1 Circle of Langa, report of 1-5 April 1953; SSK, S.5/2A/37, report by Rev. Scheffler, 1951; report by Rev. Hofmeyr, 30 June 1958.

[238]SSK, S.5/2A/37, report by Rev. Hofmeyr, 30 June 1960, p. 2; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 101.

heathens". Moralism and the ideal of character had certainly tended to serve a social differentiation process, whereby adherents were separated from urbanised non-churchgoers and the "red pagans". The fact that respectable clergy identified the influx of "bachelor" workers from the mid-1950s as the major cause of turbulence in Langa, on account of them being "poor class", "rascals" and "hooligans", further contributed to these social disturbances and tensions.[239] Thus, by failing to respond meaningfully to harsh measures, like the effects of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy, and by being mainly concerned with the interests of the church petty bourgeoisie, mission *yokwenyani* ideology in Langa served to accelerate the class distinctions in the township, which became so severe by 1960.

The intensity of gathering external resistance to local religious institutions culminated in the burning of certain churches in the socio-political upheavals of March 1960. What began as a controlled and orderly anti-pass campaign led by the PAC, subsequently developed into a violent and turbulent uprising against official authority.[240] As part of their militant resistance to authoritarian repression, arsonists targeted the buildings of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Bantu Methodist Church and the Order of Ethiopia, and the New Apostolic Church's tent, along with setting official township institutions on fire.[241] The fact that two of these churches, the BMC and Order of Ethiopia, were essentially black organisations suggested that the burning was specifically anti-church and not anti-white. With two of the four being respectable institutions, and the other two dependent on white authorities and resources, it would appear, too, that the attacks were directed against the political moderatism and elitism of mission *yokwenyani* church ideology. Most

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[239]See, for example, Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 21, interview with Rev. Louw, 1956.

[240]For a detailed discussion of the upheavals, see Lodge, "Insurectionism", ch. 3; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town", pp. 385-397.

[241]Argus, 22 March 1960; Cape Times, 8 June 1960; SSK, S.5/2A/37, report by Rev. Hofmeyr, 30 June 1960, p. 1; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 102.

certainly the DRC was earmarked for its overtly religious support of segregationist NP policy, but in general, it was fundamentally the moderate institutions of staunch Christians and conservative elements of the petty bourgeois religious elite that were under attack.[242]

Clearly by 1960, in the face of a range of both internal and external pressures that had reached their peak in the upheavals of March 1960, the western church ethic appeared particularly vulnerable. The attraction of new, emerging Africanist religious paradigms in Langa seemed to offer greater hope and progress in a township increasingly squeezed by poor living conditions and segregationist laws. However, in the context of authoritarian repression in Langa and the draconian restrictions of an increasingly police state in the early 1960s, religious optimism about an immediate and apocalyptic solution to the pressing situation also waned as the organised structures of the PAC and its military wing, Poqo, were smashed after numerous arrests from, and raids on, their headquarters in the Langa flats and hostels. By the mid-1960s, after a lull in their activities, several of the leading respectable churches, still clinging to the same westernised version of the gospel, were again offering a variety of recreational functions and were also recording increasing membership figures. Partly, this was a conservative response on the side of residents within the married quarters, as well as certain semi-urbanised and rural migrants in the hostels, to radical political violence and its destructive effects in the township in the early 1960s. These sections of the community sought to distance themselves from the radical political environment by associating with the conservatism and sanctity of the *yokwenyani* churches. Thus, middle-class morality and piety proved surprisingly persistent, in spite of its many compounded pressures, by continuing to contribute powerfully to the restoration of an apolitical and conservative stabilising atmosphere during the mid-to-late 1960s. Nevertheless, the vast majority of Langa residents had long rejected the captivity of local churches to white liberal ideology. Despite a period of quiescence, the weakness and subordination of the western church ethic had been too sharply exposed to prevent a later shift towards new religious

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[242]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 102, 103.

cosmologies for personal and socio-political freedom, which would emerge from within and outside the Langa churches. Thus, the foundations had been laid for the future synthesis of a variety of African and Christian religious resources, which would markedly alter the strictly moderate and sacred character of some local Langa churches towards the end of the 1970s.[243]

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[243] Argus, 18 January 1977; interview with Rev. Kokoali (conducted by G. Hartley), 1 April 1993.

CHAPTER TWO

Religion, Education and Culture

2.1 Respectable churches and the establishment of schools and "healthful" recreation

The extensive role and reproduction of mission ideology in Langa would by no means be confined to the domain of the churches alone, but would also come to dominate the realm of education and cultural forms of association, initially through the outreach movement of the respectable churches themselves. Especially in the context of unambiguous apathy and indifference on the part of official authorities, the path was cleared for the *yokwenyani* churches, in collaboration with support from sympathetic white liberals, to cater for the early provision of leisure occupations, recreational facilities and the formal education of Africans in Langa.

With the CC set on reducing its expenditure and prepared to spend only minimally on the development of cultural activities and institutions in Langa in the late 1920s and 1930s[1], much of the early organised entertainment in the township came to be arranged by the respectable churches. In this way, the religious institutions became the first centres of formal African cultural development in Langa primarily along elitist lines, before the later growth of large-scale public and commercialised recreation. Apart from the regular and characteristic church-centred activities, which were viewed by many churchgoers as being the most worthy and cheapest form of entertainment, a range of church concerts, choral performances, choral competitions, youth movements, school music festivals, walks, outings, teas, official receptions, public celebrations and railroad excursions were therefore organised by the respectable churches, notably in the 1930s and early 1940s. Such mission ventures would receive the strong backing of local

[1] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 25 October 1927.

authorities, in continuity with their backing of "wholesome" church concerts and services in Ndabeni, where "wild" parties had been illegal and "undesirable" dancing banned from its Botha Hall.[2]

Similarly, with the lack of intent on the public administration's part to provide for adequate African education at its own expense, despite rhetoric about the establishment of a well-equipped, model township, it was left to the mission churches to take up educational questions and to provide for some systematised education of Africans in Langa. Thus, when the CC planned the removal of Africans from Ndabeni, the city slums and squatter camps in the Peninsula to Langa, neither the Council nor the Cape School Board made any provision whatsoever for the relocation of the existing two schools in Ndabeni or for the establishment of new educational facilities in Langa. Instead, African schools were considered the domain of the missions – in line with the close association of missionaries with the formal education of Africans since the early nineteenth century – so that it was left to local church authorities to pursue the issue in questions concerning the transferral, funding and provision of educational facilities in Langa. As a result, mainly white mission clergy came to play the leading role in shaping the establishment and character of early educational institutions in Langa, ensuring that mission schools would dominate the educational sphere in the township.

In the process of the establishment of schools in Langa, crucial questions surfaced with regard to the administration of African education, in terms of the role played by both public and mission authorities. Matters of authority and responsibility were raised, revealing the administration's lack

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[2]Interestingly, the dances were banned at the request of churchmen such as Rev. Mtimkulu, Limba and Gaika, who were concerned about the moral and social status of residents being undermined, as well as the deleterious effect they were having on attendance at church services and concerts. See 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, Ndabeni Advisory Board (NAB) minutes, 26 August 1930 (annexure to NAC minutes).

of interest in financing African schools, combined with assertive attempts to gain forms of control over the educational process. In this regard, complexity in the matter of administrative control being hitherto divided between the state, provincial departments, city councils, missions and parents, fuelled issues of responsibility and contributed to delay in the establishment of schools. The position of mainly white mission authorities was also revealing in terms of their denominational interests and paternalistic attitudes, which contrasted with the wider public motivations of many black ministers and parents. In the end, the views of the white-dominated mission clergy prevailed, who, through being favoured by the provincial and municipal authorities, would make certain that mission educational ideology flourished in prescribed denominational schools.

The first questions taken up by the local church authorities centred around whether to continue the existing Ndabeni facilities in their present form in Langa. As they were run at the time, the two schools in Ndabeni both offered classes from Sub A to Standard Six. One was a private primary school, St. Cyprian's, administered by the Anglican Church and which already had an attendance of 232 students by 1924. The other was an interdenominational school, Uitvlugt United Mission, managed by the Township Superintendent and a council of mission authorities, which in 1924 had a school roll of 124 students.[3] In response to these issues, an interesting cleavage of opinion developed amongst the local clergy, largely along racial lines.

A number of African church authorities argued strongly for a secular public (what they called "undenominational") school under the control of the Cape Education Department (CED) and downplayed the establishment of denominational schools, although they were prepared to submit that no church should be barred from conducting its own school. They wanted a public school in

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[3] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 14 January 1924, p. 257.

Langa, mainly as a result of the pressures and burdens of conducting the schools in Ndabeni, which were already being seriously felt by 1924. They wished to be relieved of these educational responsibilities, and argued that the provision of religious instruction should rather be given by the different religious bodies at their respective churches. They did not intend to relinquish total control of the schools, though, as they also requested representation on the School Board.[4] Local white clergy, by contrast, preferred to retain greater control over the education process and were averse to the formation of a public "undenominational" school. As such, the white-dominated local ministers' fraternal argued instead for the continued missionary tradition of denominational schools. In this regard, the fraternal supported the transferral of St. Cyprian's to Langa, and also called for the opening of a Wesleyan Church school, as a result of the Methodist Church being the largest denomination represented in Ndabeni. In these views, the fraternal had been particularly influenced by clergy in the Anglican Church. Given their history of educational work in Ndabeni, they obviously wished to transfer their school to a new site in Langa, but they were also opposed to one school for all denominations, on the basis that the religious character of a distinctly Anglican education would not permeate the entire curriculum and atmosphere of any such interdenominational school.[5]

Unlike the attitudes of the local white clergy, government policy by the mid-1920s was geared towards discouraging the spread of denominational schools and rather supported the principle of establishing interdenominational schools. Such a policy was formulated in the belief that individual churches were experiencing increasing burdens in the education of Africans. Costs were becoming

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[4] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 14 January 1924, p.257; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, 10 December 1925, p.123; 3/CT 4/1/5/127, 14 January 1924.

[5] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 19 December 1923, p. 258; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, 16 November 1925, p. 109.

so great that it was argued that interdenominational schools might be better equipped to serve the community. Following these broader governmental principles and under pressure from mission authorities to act, the CC decided to provide free sites for one interdenominational primary school catering for up to Standard Three and one high school, which would both come under the joint control of mission authorities.[6] After successive deputations led by the Archbishop of Cape Town, W.M. Carter, the Council was also persuaded to make an exception in government policy to grant the Anglican Church a loan to establish a private primary school in Langa, again going just to Standard Three. Although the Council argued that this was a special case, based on the Anglican Church's past educational efforts in Ndabeni, the beginnings of municipal favouritism towards the Anglican Church were clearly evident.[7] It is significant to note, too, that both authorised primary schools were only granted existence in Langa on the grounds that they forfeited their upper level classes. This smacked of the later Bantu Education policy of reclassifying schools, which although in both situations supposedly a solution to accommodation difficulties, was clearly an attempt to downgrade African education in the face of rising African social, economic and political aspirations. Local Anglican Church authorities again contended this provision and once more were treated leniently by being promised, after relatively good-humoured discussion, that St. Cyprian's would remain a full primary school in Langa. [8]

The next matter with which the local clergy were left to deal, concerned the question of financial obligation for the erection of the school buildings. As adopted in one of its resolutions on 30

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[6] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 5 February 1924, p. 260; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, 18 February 1926, p. 21.

[7] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 26 March 1924, p. 281, 16 May 1924, pp. 32, 34, 36, 29 July 1924, p. 96 and 2 May 1925, p.28.

[8] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 2 May 1924, p. 28; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 18 February 1926, p. 21.

March 1926, the CC was prepared to do no more than lease sites for the three officially-sanctioned schools and expected churches to finance the school projects. As a consequence, the Anglican Church had proceeded with raising its own funds, so that with the wider support of the denomination in the Peninsula, the school building was completed by 1928. The only municipal support the new Anglican school received came from the government salary grants for teachers, which had previously been made available in Ndabeni.[9] The question of funding for the two interdenominational schools was not as easily resolved.

By and large, local church authorities were not prepared to pay for the two interdenominational schools. It is of interest to note that the Methodist clergy were, though, willing to pay for the building of a Wesleyan Church school if it received official authorisation. Most clergy believed that the CC was responsible, particularly in view of the erection of the Uitvlugt Mission School in Langa. Although the school building at Ndabeni had been erected by the Cape Education Department, it had become the property of the Council with the transferral of the location in 1925 to the Cape Town Municipality. Since the Council was closing down Ndabeni, it was felt that the Council as the legal owner of the school, should provide for the corresponding facility in the new township.[10] The CC, however, was always quick to abdicate responsibility by replying that the matter was not one for themselves, but for the education authorities of the province. But both the central government and the Cape Provincial Administration were equally at pains to point out that no provision was made in the law for school buildings to be erected at the expense of the government. They indicated that the only assistance to be made available was in the provision of

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[9] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 10 June 1933, p. 266.

[10] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 18 February 1926, p. 21; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 18 November 1932, p. 71 and 21 March 1935.

"rent grants" under Ordinance 25 of 1925, which were granted at a rate not exceeding five percent per annum on the cost of the building.[11]

By the end of 1933, church authorities had made little headway. The issue remained unresolved, with the Council and CED between them making no financial provision for either the removal of Uitvlugt Mission School to Langa or for the establishment of the interdenominational high school. A major reason for the CC's stalling tactics related directly to its policy on influx control, in line with the directives of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923. The CC held the firm belief that the provision of schools – particularly secondary institutions – would attract Africans to Cape Town. It was argued that the building of a high school, for example, would only lure students from the rural areas to complete their education and thus simply provide "an added attraction for natives to migrate to Cape Town". Ironically, then, despite the initial propaganda about a "garden" and fully-equipped township, in reality, the Council sought to ensure that the township did not become a magnet, both in terms of adequate schooling and housing provision.[12] At the same time, fears of an educated African population seeking political rights were prominent in the Council's attempts to inhibit the growth of African schooling in Langa. This was made clear a year earlier in 1932, when the Council rejected Rev. Citashe's application to open an adult night school in a dormitory of the north barracks, on the basis of grave concern and disapproval that Citashe was primarily seeking to enable adult black men to become registered voters by teaching them basic literacy skills.[13]

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[11] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 18 November 1932, p. 71 and 12 September 1934, p.54.

[12] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 17 September 1934. This point has been made in Mohamed, "Langa High School", pp. 20, 21, 24.

[13] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 11 April 1932, p. 429.

With the question of inadequate schooling becoming critical by the mid-1930s, the local clergy stepped up their campaign to secure official financial support. Especially in the context of St. Cyprian's becoming overcrowded by this time and having to turn students away, together with many children left without any schooling in the process of the rapid curtailment of Ndabeni, the concern for basic rights to education became paramount.[14] In alliance with the LAB and Cape Peninsula Joint Council of Europeans and Bantu (JC), local church authorities despatched deputations to the CC, thereby intensifying pressure on the municipal authorities to assume responsibility in the matter.[15] Consequently, the CC became increasingly conscientised towards taking some form of action. Initially, the Council responded by opening a branch of the Uitvlugt Mission School in the market hall at Langa in October 1934. The hall was leased as a temporary measure prior to the proposed building of the school, and was to be funded by a rent grant obtained through the CED.[16] The school question, however, continued to be urgent as only 700 pupils were now being accommodated in the existing facilities, out of a possible 1500 children of schoolgoing age. 250 of these were still at the Uitvlugt Mission School at Ndabeni, 300 were at St. Cyprian's and 120 in the market hall. With the closure of Ndabeni and the interdenominational school there set for 1935, and with church authorities still declining to finance the building of interdenominational schools, a schooling accommodation crisis within the municipal framework was imminent. Rather than accept the increasing demands to take responsibility and build the schools in Langa, the CC overcame the impasse by repealing previous resolutions, to pave the way instead for the establishment of denominational educational institutions. Clearly, in the final analysis, the CC was not prepared to cover building costs, especially when it became clear that

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[14] Cape Times, 12 September 1934.

[15] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 17 October 1932, p.80 and 10 December 1934, p. 72.

[16] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 15 May 1933, p. 207 and 10 October 1934, p. 37.

one interdenominational primary school would not be sufficient to accommodate the number of pupils concerned. To accept fiscal responsibility for building one school would have meant setting a precedent for erecting others, and so the CC became keen to reverse the previous restrictions on denominational schools. In addition, in view of the purported municipal economic restrictions in the aftermath of the 1929 Depression, the CC was certainly not willing to incur unforeseen costs for African schools at its own expense. Instead, conscious of the ambitions of local mission churches to establish their own schools in the township and pandering to their wishes, the CC had an easy outlet to evade any fiscal obligations in the accommodation crisis.

In the knowledge that only the more established denominations were in a position to administer schools, the CC was therefore prepared to make sites available and to allow favoured mainline churches, to erect permanent school buildings. In this way, the denominational concerns and objectives of the mainly white local clergy were ratified and the scene set for mainstream churches to dominate the educational sphere through the reproduction of white-orientated agendas and mission ideology. In line with their partisan interests, established denominations responded swiftly to the new provisions in policy and, as a consequence, the need for an interdenominational school even fell away. Already by 1935 the Roman Catholic Church had opened a school and the Methodist school plans had been approved.[17] The Dutch Reformed and American Methodist Episcopal denominations began holding classes in their churches and would later apply for school sites in the mid-1940s.[18] The rise of these denominational schools would provide all of the primary education until the mid-1950s, when Bantu Education was implemented in Langa, as they were able to cater sufficiently for all the children of schoolgoing age in the township. By 1952, the

[17] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 11 April 1935, p. 164 and 20 May 1935, p. 180.

[18] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/11, minutes of the NAC, 13 April 1945.

Methodist School was attended by 590 students, the Anglican by 503, the Roman Catholic by 276, the Dutch Reformed by 210 and the AME kindergarten by 76 children.[19]

Not only does the quest for African schooling reflect poorly on the City Council, but it is also, in some ways, an indictment of the agenda of the respective Langa churches. Although local church authorities were instrumental in initiating the move for African education in Langa,[20] in the eagerness of mainly white clergy to form denominational schools they revealed their parochial interests at the expense of local African ecclesiastical and parental calls for secular public schooling. This, in retrospect, might have better served the educational needs and social circumstances of the community at that time. So far as local white church authorities were concerned, though, this was an opportunity to stamp their impression and discrete religious visions upon the development of African education in the township.

2.2 Mission ideology and the development of schools, leisure activities and early petty bourgeois voluntary associations

With the respectable churches, therefore, securely in control of the educational and cultural development of Langa in the 1930s and early 1940s, mission ideology came to permeate these

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[19] Cape Times, 4 December 1952.

[20] The local clergy also played a key role in pressurising the CC and CED to take responsibility for senior schooling in Langa. They achieved their objective in 1941 when the CED agreed in principle to take charge of local secondary schooling. By 6 March 1943, Langa Senior Secondary School was officially opened, being the first African high school in Cape Town, under the direct administration of the CED. These historical origins of Langa High have been traced in Mohamed, "Langa High School", chapters 2 and 3, and for that reason, together with the focus on mission schooling, have not been developed in the above text. See also, 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 15 February 1932; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 18 November 1932, p. 71; 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1, minutes of the NAC, 11 February 1938, p. 156; 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 22 May 1940; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/9, minutes of the NAC, 18 February 1941.

organised social spheres to define the character of the emerging formalised social, educational and cultural network in the township. From the beginning, mainstream church involvement in the education and cultural development of Langa was obviously shaped by parochialism, denominationalism and distinct religious concerns, which were also connected to the liberal gradualist and paternalistic intentions of the churches. In essence, the philantrophic church movement towards healthful recreation and western education was inspired by the Social Christianity of local ministers, whose aim was to penetrate the whole of life with the spirit of Jesus. As such, the Christianisation and moralising of African culture and education was considered to be crucial to this crusade.

From its inception, mission education in Langa was thus fundamentally geared towards converting Africans to the particular religious doctrines and tenets of the relevant denomination, and, to a lesser extent, towards educating them in the classic academic sense. In this context, the type of education transmitted was infused with strongly individualised religious and moral underpinnings. Such an idealist approach can be understood in various ways. Firstly, especially in the case of the local Anglican and Catholic Churches, there existed the deeply-rooted sacred belief, not only that religion should penetrate the entire school ethos, but also that it should be specific to the distinctive denominational character of the mother church, for to allow otherwise would jeopardise the child's salvation. For such reasons, white Anglican Church authorities in the mid-1920s would not support the African ministers' proposal for a public secular school, nor, for that matter, the CC's recommendations for interdenominational schools, even with facilities for religious instruction. Anglicans had to be schooled in the dogma of Anglicanism to ensure their redemption.[21] On the same basis, the local Catholic Fathers contended that Catholic children

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[21] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, Rev. Taylor (Superior in Cape Town) to Superintendent Cook, 19 December 1923, p. 258 (annexure to NAC minutes); 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 16 May 1924, p. 32; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, interviews with Anglican clergy, 1955, p. 388.

could only be nurtured in the fundamental tenets of Catholicism in a distinctly Catholic environment. They expected teachers to subscribe to the Catholic faith and thus to do a great deal more than simply teach. In fact, teachers at the Roman Catholic St. Louis Primary School were required to act as lay apostles in the school's primary perceived task of "growing" its converted Catholic children.[22]

Secondly, closely related to the first factor, the idealism of the mission educational approach was based practically on increasing enrolments in the individual churches. Schools, particularly at the elementary level, were quite naturally considered by the local clergy to be the "nursery" of the church, and deemed indispensable to establishing and enlarging congregations. Ministers understood that the existence of a denominational school meant that the church would be more strongly entrenched in the life of the community in terms of support and popularity from both adults and children. Thus, the provision of particularised religious schooling functioned as an ancillary to church membership as a means of drawing Africans into the mission sphere of influence.[23] Accordingly, the various respectable churches were very willing to support the growth of denominational primary schools in Langa. On pragmatic grounds, such a policy proved successful for those churches involved, since those denominations with schools became the most firmly entrenched and best attended in the township.

On such a basis, matters of evangelisation, discipleship, dogma and doctrine featured prominently in denominational schools, ensuring that mission education in Langa was characterised by an all-embracing religious context in the 1930s and 1940s. These religious elements permeated all

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[22]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interviews with Catholic Fathers, 1955.

[23]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, interview with Mr. Ngamba, 6 September 1940.

aspects of education in the mission schools including the curriculum, recreation and assemblies. By providing institutional facilities, mission authorities especially secured control over the religious and moral instruction syllabi, which tended to be the prescribed syllabi of the Diocese, rather than that of the Cape Education Department. In this way, the Catholic, Anglican and Methodist primary schools, for example, followed their own denomination-based, religious education syllabus in which Bible teaching was central to moral instruction, as were other spiritual tasks such as prayer, private spirituality and personal righteousness. In addition, the Anglican and Catholic Churches in particular made use of regular chapel services and devotional assemblies to reinforce this religious-based educational milieu.[24] Furthermore, the fact that the local clergy acted as school managers with final control over educational matters made certain that their primary concerns of Christian morality and spirituality undergirded the school environment. The overriding educational concerns of the successive ecclesiastical and predominantly white school managers throughout the 1930s and 1940s – including Rev. Father Christopher of the St. Louis Catholic School, Rev. Scheffler of the Dutch Reformed School, Rev. Majodina of the Methodist School and Rev. Father Savage of the St. Cyprian's School – centred around this religious formation of the students.[25]

Combined with this overwhelming emphasis on a "religious" education, the ecclesiastical school managers also sought to produce cultured African youths in line with western, post-Enlightenment ideas that were similarly assumed in their attempts to shape the individual lives of their church adherents.[26] As a consequence, the mission primary schools, like the respectable

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[24]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, p. 388, interviews with Anglican clergy, 1955; Kondlo, "The Culture and Religion of the People of Langa", p. 60.

[25]Cape Times, 22 March 1949; AWC 3/60 69, Methodist School documents, undated.

[26]See, for example, the views of Rev. Msengane cited in Kondlo, "The Culture and Religion of the People

churches, came to function as powerful sites of western cultural transmission in the 1930s and 1940s. Fundamentally, this demanded a schooling approach centred upon a curriculum that dictated a rejection of certain traditional practices and customs. To this end, the mission school managers welcomed the implementation of the CED's civilising programme of "the three Rs", which was expected to be adhered to since the mission schools relied on government salary grants for teachers. Working closely with similar objectives to the education authorities, the ecclesiastical managers thus made certain that children were inculcated into new understandings of culture, morality and society, which was clearly reflected in a collection of essays by pupils from the St. Cyprian's Primary School in the early 1930s on the topic, "Why school is important to me". The essays revealed a close elision between aspects of "western civilisation", "respectability", "discipline" and "Christianity", which were deemed as crucial in defining the importance of their schooling in contrast to unworthy elements of "ignorance", "laziness", "heathendom" and "idleness".[27]

At the same time, this cultural idealism of mission educational authorities was also closely tied to their support of contemporary theories of adapted and differentiated education in the 1930s and 1940s. As an extension of the church ideology, the ecclesiastical school management was agreed that the historical lag in the process of African civilisation demanded a particular form of education geared towards the distinctive needs of Africans. To this end, similar to the views of Union Government educational authorities throughout the 1930s and 1940s, school managers spoke adamantly about the "indispensable requirement" for segregation in the early stages of African schooling, given "the vast difference in the development of the European and African child". Unlike a growing number of Union Government officials and later NP education

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of Langa", p. 60; Molteno Papers, BC 579, S.M. Matshiqi to Molteno, 18 April 1940.

[27]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, school essays, undated.

segregationists, though, who sought to maintain inequality and differentiation in African education indefinitely, the mission management did recognise that such a gulf needed to be bridged. Despite the historical lag, this did not mean that Africans were congenitally inferior.[28] With the prevalence of such attitudes amongst Christian school personnel and ecclesiastical school managers, it is not surprising to discover that the mission schools supported a curriculum, framed within the broader requirements of the CED, which was geared towards "helping African youths to accommodate themselves to modern conditions". This ultimately led to an emphasis on bookkeeping, domestic science, hygiene, manual training and gardening in the Langa schools. Although this might be interpreted as a deliberate attempt on the part of mission managers, in collusion with the authorities, to prepare Langa children for a servile position in the hierarchy of social relations, it seems that such an accentuation of practical subjects was rather based on a combination of mission assumptions of paternalism, trusteeship and adaptation in education. For, although recognising that a curriculum so weighted did not lead directly to either employment or advanced studies, mission school managers did believe that such an approach was critical towards assisting African children in coping and acquainting themselves with civilised, urban society so that they might eventually take their place in the modern world. In addition, local mission support for adapted education can also be explained in terms of idealistic Social Gospel views about African culture. Ecclesiastical managers sought to encourage a particularised education that would seek to promote the better attributes of "African culture", at the same time as promoting the values and ethos of European civilisation. With the mission schools in Langa drawing mainly from distinctive ethnic groups (St. Cyprian's and the Methodist School were attended mainly by Xhosa students, with the Dutch Reformed Church School attracting mainly Sotho children), ethnic-specific

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[28] Cape Times, 7 May 1947; Friedlander Papers, BC 580, JC minutes, 6 May 1947 (reference to talk by Mr. Mkize on segregation in education).

teaching and schooling in the relevant vernacular were also considered crucial to this developmental end.[29]

In order to reinforce the influences of mission school education to Christianise the youth, respectable churches took particular interest in the early development of youth movements in Langa. Apart from the provision of established church-specific activities such as Sunday schools and junior *manyano* groupings, mission churches therefore became principally involved in the shaping of the character of broader youth organisations. Of particular importance in the early 1930s was their central role in the formation and development of the Girl Wayfarers' and Boy Pathfinders' movements, which were the first formal youth organisations to be founded in Langa and which went on to prove to be remarkably influential.

The local Anglican Church, together with its range of white liberal contacts and patrons in Cape Town, acted as the primary moving force behind the emergence of the scouting movement in Langa. Financed by the "white friends" of the Anglican mission, the Girl Wayfarers' movement was introduced when a division was opened for the junior Sunbeams (branches for younger girls between the ages of eight and thirteen) as early as 15 March 1930.[30] The Boy Pathfinders' movement was instituted shortly thereafter by the local Anglican mission authorities and, by 1935, the organisation already had a membership of eighty schoolboys.[31] With the establishment of the

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[29]Kondlo, "The Culture and Religion of the People of Langa", p. 60; Friedlander Papers, BC 580, JC minutes, 3 August 1943.

[30]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 43, July 1930, p. 2. The first projects of the movement were initiated and financed by these "white friends". The cooking and medical aid classes, for example, owed their introduction to this white aid. See ibid., no. 52, September 1933.

[31]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 57, February 1935.

organisations as Girl Wayfarers' and Boy Pathfinders' movements, the Anglican founders - both black and white - instituted the groupings as specifically African branches parallel to the white Girl Guides' and Boy Scouts' organisations. This conformed to the structural and racial divisions inherent within the broader scouting movement in South Africa. When African scouting was introduced by Prof. Rheinallt-Jones in 1918, it was refused integration with the white scout movement and was not permitted to apply for independent international recognition. Instead, the African body was forced to be launched as a separate organisation by the white scouting authorities with its international status dependent on and correspondence directed through the white organisation.[32] Thus, in introducing the African scout movement in Langa, the local Anglican Church authorities simply accepted and reflected the organisational differentiation as a matter of course.

From their inception, the Anglican organisers ensured that the Wayfarers and Pathfinders functioned as supplementary agencies to mission schooling in the township. Recruitment was made through the schools, in particular St. Cyprian's, where ecclesiastical managers and Christian teachers would encourage students to join. Under broader white supervision, Miss Nongauza and Arthur Nzukuma - senior educators at the St. Cyprian's School and both with strong Anglican commitments - provided the initial adult leadership of the Wayfarers and Pathfinders respectively.[33] Thus, in their very formation, leadership and social structure, the organisations were essentially mission-centred enterprises, with the Social Christian ideology of the Anglican

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[32]R. Archer and A. Bouillan, The South African Game: Sport and Racism in South Africa, (London, ZED Press, 1982), p. 123.

[33]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 48, May 1931, p. 1 and no. 57, February 1935; AWC 3/6 125, Rogers to Sims, 27 October 1947.

religious and educational institutions powerfully informing the "progressive" character of the movements in Langa.

Distinct religious concerns were thus again paramount to the functioning of the associations, with Christian values, prayers and religious knowledge forming the core of the early programmes. The initial Anglican leadership felt especially duty-bound to promote the "progressive" ideals of Christian character. Loyalty, honourability, upliftment and self-help were necessary counter agencies to what was considered to be the "potential profligacy and licentiousness" that could result from contact with the "idle" migrant culture of the Langa north barracks. Educational work also retained a prominent position in opening programmes, as the early adult leadership considered its "morally regenerative" functions to be critical to the transformation of children into respectable citizens. Drilling was a compulsory activity for boys as a means of inculcating habits of discipline, manliness, duty and service towards integrating them into broader society as good citizens. For girls, gender-specific instruction in cooking, sewing, knitting and first-aid was stressed in the early programmes. This emphasis in practical skills and domesticity sought to promote the ideals of self-help and self-reliance to assist girls to adapt themselves to modern, "civilised" conditions. In addition, healthy group games, community singing and sports (mainly soccer for boys and netball for girls) were also important activities, viewed by the early leadership as being critical to both the physical and moral development of children in their advancement towards responsible adulthood and dutiful citizenship.[34] As the Anglican minister, principal and manager of St. Cyprian's School, Father Savage was particularly supportive of the scouting movement in Langa as a means of disciplining the youth. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, he worked closely with the local mission-based scouting leadership to make certain that the

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[34]Botto, "Some Aspects of the Leisure Occupations", pp. 107, 108; SAL, Ixilongo, no. 52, September 1933.

movement continued to pursue these objectives with the intention of producing youth of church-going, respectable and mature habits, who might, in turn, be recommended for economic reliability and social recognition.[35]

In this way, the Pathfinder and Wayfarer movements in Langa did not simply exist as self-sacrificing, religious pursuits bent upon providing happy games and Christian service; they were also important instruments for the cultural transmission of elitist and mission ideology. Aware that their efforts to provide loyal African citizens who would cause no disturbance to the basic order of society overlapped with the intended objectives of government authorities, local and national mission scouting leadership solicited the collaboration of township officials towards achieving common aims in the 1930s and 1940s. To this end, the Pathfinder Scout Commissioner, Sims, for example, elicited Rogers's "fatherly eye" as the Superintendent of the township in the promotion of the movement in Langa in the 1940s. In Sims's view, the scouts were designed "to turn out good citizens to improve the Langa outlook on life" and "to provide an outlet for Langa youth to blow off steam in the right direction".[36] Rogers duly obliged and took his envisaged "fatherly" role to heart by showing favourable support to the Pathfinders, especially in the late 1940s and early 1950s, by organising preferential access to facilities, grants-in-aid and land for a Scout Hall, at a time when such governmental concessions were exceedingly difficult to secure.[37] This close working relationship with township authorities and government officials in furthering mission ideals was also expressed in the avid participation of, and encouragement from, officials at

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[35]AWC 3/6 125, Rogers to Sims, 27 October 1947.

[36]AWC 3/6 125, Sims to Rogers, 23 June 1947; ibid., Rogers to Sims, 27 October 1947.

[37]AWC 3/6 125, Fleisher, General Secretary of the Pathfinder Boy Scouts' Association, to Rogers, 13 July 1948; ibid., Town Clerk to City Treasurer, 28 June 1952; ibid., scout hall documents, 1953; AWC 3/59 112, Rogers to Bantu Press, Editorial Director, 14 October 1949; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/20, social work report, 31 March 1955 (annexure to NAC minutes).

scouting functions in the township, as well as in their positions as patrons of the movements.[38] Especially in the 1930s and early 1940s, Langa scouting rallies, usually held at St. Cyprian's, were particularly well attended by a range of official dignitaries, which included the Governor-General and his wife, who generally reinforced underlying commitments to empire and political gradualism on such occasions. The rallies were ostentatious occasions, where a spirit of goodwill, brotherhood and harmony reportedly dominated proceedings. In effect, they served to inculcate middle-class mission values as a means of establishing respect for notables in authority, and in accustoming scouting youth to accept and take pride in their place in the social order. The address given by the Governor-General's wife, the Lady of Clarendon, to the Wayfarers at a St. Cyprian's rally in 1935 was typical of the ideological undercurrents that characterised such an event. Couched in impassioned religious undertones, she appealed to the youthful "Torchbearers" to look to the "Almighty Father above" to provide them with "endless patience and goodwill" in their quest to become educated and progress to the level of European civilisation. At the same time, she warned the girls not to listen to "cruel agitators who lead so many into mischief", but rather to accept the "two racial divisions of mankind in South Africa" until such time, "at Eventide", that the disparate groups could come together "in some sort of partnership".[39]

In addition to their role in the origins and early development of youth movements in Langa, the respectable churches were also centrally involved in the co-ordination, arrangement and support of public celebrations and memorials in the 1930s and 1940s, which again functioned to spread and reinforce the ideological influence of mission Christianity, mainly amongst school children and the churchgoing elite. Coronation celebrations for the monarchy were particularly well organised

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[38]See, for example, SAL, Ixilongo, no. 32, May 1929, p. 2 and no. 48, May 1931, p. 1; AWC 3/6 125, Magodla to Rogers, 8 March 1950.

[39]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 58, June 1935, p. 3.

by Langa church ministers from the 1930s to the 1940s, and were generally acknowledged to be staged for the benefit of school children, their teachers and the local clergy, who were the main patrons.[40] Typically, the public event was championed in the name of "Christianity, the Empire and Civilisation" and was naturally infused with imperialistic and religious fervour as *yokwenyani* ministers and invited officials upheld Britain in their prayers, speeches and dedications as the symbol of a Christian nation. The commemorative day included free dinners provided to elite African guests and representative township authorities. School children received sweets and medals, and the football final of the Governor-General's shield (later the King George V Jubilee Shield) was played in tribute to British sovereignty.[41] In many ways, the celebratory occasion served to ratify the existing social order in the Cape and Langa by stressing the convergent ideals of imperialism, racial gradualism and Christianity. To this end, the CC even covered the costs of the celebrations in an effort to promote "healthful" township values and usually found it necessary at the end of the celebrations to commend the participants for "conducting themselves well".[42]

The Mendi Memorial Service (MMS) was another major public event largely administered by the respectable churches, where the local clergy sought to extend the mission sphere of influence amongst the Christian elite and scholars alike. The MMS began towards the end of the 1930s to memorialise the death of 633 African soldiers, who had died on the troopship Mendi in 1917 during the First World War, after the ship had sunk following a collision with another Allied vessel off the Isle of Wight. The ship had been taking members of the South African Native

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40 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/7, minutes of the NAC, 15 April 1935, p. 157; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/8, minutes of the NAC, 20 April 1937, p. 367.

41 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/7, minutes of the NAC, 15 April 1935, p. 157; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/11, minutes of the NAC, 9 July 1946, p. 342.

42 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/7, minutes of the NAC, 9 April 1935, p. 183 and 14 May 1935, p. 230; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/8, minutes of the NAC, 20 April 1937, p. 367.

Labour Corps for service in France. The implied moral of the occasion was to extol the virtues of the dead heroes, who were considered courageous in the giving of their lives "in the service of their white masters". The fact that they died "for the love of Africa and all that the British Empire stood for in the civilised world" was appraised as worthy of statutory remembrance.[43]

Initially, individual local *yokwenyani* ministers such as the Revs. Matshikwe, Citashe, Savage and Bull were the principal organisers of the event. Later, with the formation of the respectable Cape Peninsula African Ministers' Association, the interdenominational body became responsible for the organisation of the event in collaboration with the Mendi Memorial Committee. Ministers presided over the memorial service, which included hymn-singing, prayers, biblical readings and sermons.[44] By the mid-1940s and into the early 1950s, the commemorative event had developed into a so-called "polished affair", and was relatively well attended. The service was considered to be a "magnificent spectacle" by many of the Christian elite. Local *yokwenyani* churches made sure that their *manyano* groups turned out *en force*, wearing their uniforms and singing songs.[45] Church choirs from the Anglican, Methodist and Dutch Reformed denominations often participated, as did the Langa High School choir and the interdenominational Langa Choristers,

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[43] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/8, minutes of the NAC, 9 February 1937, p. 326; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/9, minutes of the NAC, 11 February 1941; AWC 3/44 97, document on the sinking of the troopship, "Mendi", 1950; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 21, Mendi celebrations, p. 448.

[44] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/8, minutes of the NAC, 9 February 1937, p. 326; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/9, minutes of the NAC, 11 February 1941; Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, Mendi Memorial programmes, 13 March 1938 and 13 March 1941. The Reverends Lediga and Maya, and later the Reverends Ndzotyana and Dyafta were the principal organisers of the event in the 1950s. Local ministers involved in the proceedings during that decade included the Reverends Sipoyo, Ndaliso, Lukuko, Tshabangu, Teka, Louw, Tshazibana, Mbizela, Ngcakana, Mtimkulu, Thethiwe and Hofmeyr. See AWC 3/44 97, untitled document, 8 February 1954; ibid., programmes, 2 March 1952, 22 March 1953, 27 February 1955, 26 February 1956, 24 February 1957, 22 February 1959 and 28 February 1960; ibid., Mendi Memorial Scholarship Fund General Committee documents, 1960; Cape Times, 29 February 1960.

[45] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Maya, 1955, p. 448; ibid., box 21, Mendi celebrations.

under the guidance of the culturally active, AME church member, B. Pasha.[46] The Boy Pathfinders and Girl Wayfarers were also represented in uniform, with some of the Pathfinders rendering the last post.[47]

In essence, the commemoration was a privileged affair, with reportedly few of the "uneducated" present, where the local African elite combined with white Cape liberals and township officials to pledge their unswerving loyalty to the monarchy and to the Union Government of South Africa. Little changed in terms of the message and structured programme of the Mendi event from the late 1930s through to as late as the mid-1950s. Since its inception, ministers had used the opportunity to praise the British Empire "for winning Africans from darkness to Christian civilisation". By the mid-1950s, as a principal organiser of the occasion, Rev. Maya continued to insist upon his "one hundred percent loyalty" to the Crown and the Royal Family, and always looked forward to the presence of a distinguished white audience.[48] At the same time, throughout the period, ministers in their sermonising expressed the hope that Africans, considering "their transitory stage towards civilisation", would in the intervening period receive good government treatment, as well as the opportunity to become responsible citizens towards a sharing in cultural affairs. Significantly, Revelation 7: 9-17 became the prescribed annual reading, which envisaged the unity of all nations along Christian lines before the Lamb of God. The local Christian elite favoured this passage as a claim to their socio-cultural and political rights.[49]

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[46]See, for example, AWC 3/44 97, programmes, 2 March 1952, 22 February 1959 and 28 February 1960.

[47]See, for example, AWC 3/44 97, programmes, 1953 and 1955.

[48]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Maya, 1955, p. 448; ibid., box 21, Mendi celebrations.

[49]See, for example, Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, Mendi Memorial programme, 13 March 1938; AWC 3/44 97, programmes, 1952, 1953 and 1956.

During the Second World War, the memorial service was used as a platform for African recruitment, as support was rallied for the allies in their upholding of Christian rights and principles.[50] Ministers represented Great Britain as the saviour nation, which deserved support in her efforts to usher in a new global Christian society. Services were characterised by great emotional intensity and fervour of patriotic spirit. So impassioned was the wartime support for the memorial from conservative Christians, that a scholarship fund was established in Langa in 1941. As a reflection of the interests of educated participants, the fund sought primarily to assist African children to obtain higher education within the Union. At the same time, the Mendi Memorial Scholarship Fund General Committee, strongly represented by ministers in Langa, intended to promote child welfare societies, clinics and other social services among Africans that might contribute towards the war effort and beyond. Throughout the 1940s and early 1950s, the silver collection taken during the service towards the fund received generous contributions, with the local churches weighing in heavily with their own donations.[51]

From the very first memorial service held in 1937, apart from the dominant role of the black Christian elite, the commemoration was also a largely government-sponsored affair, as careful interest was taken by local township authorities to shape the character of the event along acceptable lines. In this regard, the Township Office undertook to provide free printing of the programmes and later contributed towards the scholarship fund on a pound for pound basis by doubling the amount raised by private subscription.[52] The authorities also guaranteed the

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[50]Molteno Papers, BC 579, A24, souvenir on the Mendi disaster by S.M.B. Ncwane.

[51]AWC 3/44 97, document on the sinking of the troopship, "Mendi", 1950; ibid., programmes, 1952 and 1956; ibid., Ngubeni, Honorary Secretary of the Mendi Memorial Scholarship Fund General Committee to Manager of the Native Affairs Department, undated; ibid., speech by the Mayoral Representative, 1956; ibid., record of church donations, 1958; Cape Times, 16 February 1954.

[52]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 21, Mendi celebrations, p. 448; AWC 3/44 97, Worral, Manager of

attendance of government-employed Africans, such as nurses and members of the township administration, who were expected to be present at the service in their uniforms.[53] In addition, throughout the 1940s and into the 1950s, township officials and government authorities such as the Mayor, the Bantu Native Commissioner, the Township Superintendent, the parliamentary Native Representatives, members of the Native Affairs Department (NAD) and City Councillors were scrupulous about attendance, and, in some cases, to address the official function.[54]

The moral stressed by government officials differed little from the clergy's sermonising on the occasion, and again remained unchanged throughout the period. The memorial speech of Henry, the Mayoral Representative in 1955, for example, was typical of official addresses from the early 1940s and was, in fact, actually plagiarised from previous orations. Henry made use of the opportunity to urge an "ever-growing spirit of service and sacrifice", in keeping with the qualities displayed by the men who had lost their lives. He extolled the responsibility and discipline of the dead heroes as virtuous ideals to be cherished and pursued.[55] In this way, the morality-based message of the mission churches was reinforced by the authorities to provide another layer to the local clergy's close alignment with establishment assumptions.

Apart from their direct influence in the early provision of mission education and healthful recreation in Langa, *yokwenyani* churches also contributed indirectly to the initial development

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Native Administration to Lediga, 21 February 1952. City Councillors also undertook to contribute towards the fund privately. See, for example, AWC 3/44 97, contributions from Councillors, 1957.

[53]Kondlo, "The Culture and Religion of the People of Langa", p. 41.

[54]See, for example, Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, field report, 23 February 1941; AWC 3/44 97, programmes, 1953 and 1955; ibid., Maya to Rogers, 4 February 1955; Cape Times, 23 February 1959; ibid., 29 February 1960.

[55]AWC 3/44 97, document of the speech given by R.F. Henry, Mayoral Representative and

and character of local social and cultural networks, by exhorting the churchgoing petty bourgeoisie to form their own voluntary associations as part of a broader social movement. Together with the local mission clergy, the educated Christian elite – mainly from the Anglican and Methodist denominations – came to provide the founding membership and early leadership of the first voluntary cultural associations in Langa. In so doing, with their social origins commonly derived from their shared mission school background and respectable church membership, they came to shape these early social welfare organisations along distinctly Christian lines. In this context, the Cape Peninsula African Social Club (CPASC) was the first formal black voluntary association to be established in Langa in 1931. Its founding members originated from the mission churches, with the Rev. Mtimkulu as its inaugural President.[56] The founders motivated for the club's establishment in overtly Christian-based categories of morality. They affirmed that, as an organisation of responsible leadership, the club existed to contain the evil effects of urbanisation on Africans in the Peninsula, those ignorant of township life. In essence, members argued that the organisation was designed to direct the modern acculturation of the "backward heathen" by seeking to wean them from "misguided" and "irresponsible" leadership within Langa. Throughout the 1930s, similar to the *yokwenyani* churches and mission schools, the club thus advocated refinement and respectability in its social activities, as opposed to certain perceived forms of anti-social behaviour. By offering a range of recreational activities such as indoor games, parties, discussions, reading circles and educational groups, the club prided itself on providing healthy entertainment and in contributing towards an orderly, self-respecting and stable style of life. In its make-up, the club thus functioned to affirm the identity of the local Christian elite by providing a

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Chairman of the City Council Native Affairs Committee, at the service of 27 February 1955; Cape Times, 23 February 1959.

[56] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, documents on CPASC, 21 September 1931 (annexure to NAC minutes).

form of social privilege and mutual support, and by creating opportunities for cultural power, status and influence.[57]

Through its range of lectures, discussions and debates in the 1930s, the CPASC also brought the educated Christian elite in Langa into contact with white liberals of known "good repute", within broader Cape Town. These included Sir Clarkson Tredgold, Dr. William Flint, Allan Davis and M.J. Adams, who became honorary Vice-Presidents of the club, as well as Major Herbst, the Secretary of Native Affairs, who was inducted as a patron. These whites, perceived to be sympathetic to African ambitions of advancement, acted as advisors on financial and administrative matters, and were often invited to address specific cultural meetings, where the benefits of slow-but-steady progress were extolled. African members prided themselves upon their close associations with men of "high-standing" and "esteem", something which formed an important element of their cultural identity as a means of claiming their rights. In this regard, the club also fostered a working relationship with the local authorities. At its very inauguration in 1931, the CPASC sought the preferential support of the CC towards its establishment on a "sound footing" to secure the "sane" and "satisfactory" conduct of affairs so that it did not "drift" in an "unintended direction". The CC duly obliged by offering the organisation housing facilities at a nominal rent. Considering itself to be the elite cultural vanguard within Langa, the club even worked with the CC towards co-ordinating sports in Langa with a view to promoting more responsible leadership and respectable play in the 1930s.[58] With such connections reinforcing the status of the club, the CPASC received the avid support of the churchgoing petty bourgeoisie,

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[57] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, documents on CPASC, 21 September 1931 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[58] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, documents on CPASC, 21 September 1931 and 19 October 1931 (annexure to NAC minutes).

especially during the 1930s and early 1940s, and sought to circumscribe the parameters and meaning of culture in Langa as the first formal voluntary association.

The next few cultural organisations to emerge were formed during the war years of the early 1940s, again at the instigation of respectable churches and staunch mission supporters. These clubs emerged as petty bourgeois social welfare organisations to champion the war effort, justified in distinctly pro-British and Christian terms, by way of fund collecting and charity work. At the same time, their rise could be attributed to the growing number of better-off families which had gained accommodation in Langa during the war years, in the light of the relaxation of government restrictions on influx control. This liberalisation encouraged the establishment of additional clubs, geared towards social interaction between a growing number of Africans of reputable standing. Equally, it might be argued that their emergence related to the perceived threat of growing proletarianisation – a process which was well advanced in the western Cape by the 1940s, particularly with the arrival of hundreds of migrant workers in the Peninsula during the war years. The Battlers' Social Club (BSC) was the first of these clubs to emerge, with its membership drawn in the first place from churchgoers in the mission and respectable churches. On that basis, the club set itself within the framework of declared moral and Christian categories. These principled commitments were clarified in the club's constitution by describing the members' code of conduct in the following terms:

> In the attainment of the club's objectives all activities shall be conducted along lines which are in harmony with the accepted principles of Christian practice, but political propaganda shall be debarred.[59]

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[59] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/10, BSC document, 9 July 1943 (annexure to NAC minutes).

Like the CPASC, the BSC was primarily a men's club that sought to do charity work and provide a range of healthy leisure activities such as discussions, indoor games, lectures and reading circles. It also had close connections with white liberals and the township authorities.[60]

The African United Cultural and Domestic Workers' Club (AUCDWC) was another such social welfare organisation to be established at this time by *yokwenyani* church members, initially to provide philantrophic contributions to the war effort. In contrast to the CPASC and BSC, the AUCDWC was fundamentally a women's organisation. Though like the men's clubs, the AUCDWC intended to cater for religious and cultural needs. It also proposed to develop cultural and social facilities aimed at combating crime. It also reflected the quasi-religious atmosphere which was so common an element within Christian organisational proceedings in Langa. Many of the club's meetings opened and closed with a period of prayer and devotion, which, at times, could develop into lengthy sermonising, led by one of the respectable local ministers.[61]

To a large extent, between the late 1920s and the early 1940s, mission education and respectable recreation were well received in Langa, especially amongst the more permanently settled and urbanised petty bourgeois families to whom the pastimes were specifically directed. With local officials failing to take measures for the organised entertainment and recreational development of Langa, the more conservative and progressive petty bourgeoisie, together with many aspirant "school" workers, became not only dependent upon, but also appreciative of the cultural activities and leisure occupations inspired and offered by the *yokwenyani* churches. This was shown in the ready support of the Pathfinder and Wayfarer movements, the CPASC, BSC and AUCDWC, and through the strong attendances at the Mendi Memorial Service and Coronation celebrations. Such

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[60] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/10, BSC document, 9 July 1943 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[61] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/11, minutes of the NAC, 24 April 1945, p. 787.

was the initial demand for cultural interaction that even conservative and progressive petty bourgeois LAB members set aside their political differences to provide unanimous advocacy of these public events and voluntary organisations in the 1930s. Along these lines, both the more conservative and progressive middling social groups were drawn together to contribute to the early cohesion in the Langa community.

In a similar way, although parents from this segment had generally argued for secular public schooling in the township, the very necessity for African education in Langa meant that they came to value greatly the denominational interventions of the mainstream churches. Most urban-type families respected the primary mission schools as providing a positive influence by introducing basic education and literacy skills in orientating their children to the new modern and urban environment. Some parents were even reported to prefer denominational schools on the basis of their own mission-specific education which they wanted their children to experience. In line with their aspirations, they wanted a civilised and respectable education which they believed mission schooling could best provide.[62] Over time, both conservative and progressive petty bourgeois parents would articulate their admiration for the positive influence of denominational schools in controlling a potentially unruly youth in the 1930s and 1940s. They would echo the sentiments of Rogers who, on numerous public occasions, would proudly declare that the existence of ample mission educational facilities was the foremost reason that *tsotsi* gangs did not exist in Langa, like those which "terrorised" the townships in the eastern Cape and on the Rand.[63] In this way, a distinctive class spectrum promoted denominational schooling as a contribution to the emergence

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[62] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 16 May 1924, p. 32.

[63] Cape Times, 4 December 1952.

of a relatively unified African Christian mission culture in the township during the 1930s and 1940s.

At the same time, from the very inception of the township, there were those who were sceptical about the benefits of mission education and critical of some of the underlying assumptions of healthy Christian recreation. Due to the generalised acceptance of the inevitability of mission education and Christian cultural activities in the context of few alternatives, this Christian and non-Christian voice was initially overshadowed, but it gained momentum and support over time. The early opposition to denominational schools and preference for public schools in the 1920s on the part of certain progressive parents and clergy, for example, was not completely drowned out. These views once again received renewed support by the mid-1940s, once the mission schools began to experience a range of serious difficulties.[64] In this way, the arguments of some of the more progressive Christian elite of the 1920s and early 1930s, which included politically active clergy, like Rev. Mtimkulu, were revived. This perspective was based on a distinct conception of the relationship between churches and schooling. Rather than promote the all-encompassing, church-controlled religious context of mission schools, this view revived the idea that religious instruction should be conducted by the different religious bodies at their own respective churches, and that the schools should develop as normal training schools in the hands of the provincial education departments, or even, at worst, the local Advisory Board. Denominational schooling was understood by some parents and teachers to lead to a "bad spirit of competition" between the schools, as they contended amongst themselves for higher attendance. The danger was that they sought to extend their particularised religious influence to the neglect of the broader educational

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[64] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/11, minutes of the NAC, 9 October 1945, p. 1071; AWC 3/60 69, G.G. Potwana to Rogers, 26 February 1947; Cape Times, 23 February 1949.

interests of the individual child.[65] Predictably when mission schools began to face problems of internal conflict and inadequate funding by the 1940s, calls for a compulsory and public education grew in strength, undermining the conservative petty bourgeoisie's interests in a specifically religious education arranged along conventional Christian lines. The growing dissatisfaction with mission schools partly related to inefficient administration and ill-treatment of teachers by the ecclesiastical managers of schools, which brought about the resignation of a number of teachers, who lost utter confidence in the system.[66] The heavy-handed actions of the reverend school managers of St. Cyprian's in 1934, for example, who dismissed the principal teacher as he attempted to assert his independence from the ecclesiastical management, produced great antipathy towards the ministers. Certain families even boycotted the school. This set a pattern for strained relations between the teaching staff, parents and ecclesiastical managers that became especially acute by the 1940s.[67] Furthermore, the fact that mission school-stock by the 1940s was deteriorating, with schools greatly overcrowded, understaffed and lacking vital equipment, meant that they were viewed with increasing disfavour.[68] With state financial assistance remaining relatively poor, churches were struggling to provide the necessary resources to face the increasing burdens of providing primary schooling in Langa. In the context of the gradual decline of mission primary schooling in Langa, Hyslop is correct to challenge those liberal accounts which have romanticised the mission educational system in the 1930s and 1940s.[69] In these straitened

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[65]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, interview with Mr. Ngamba, 6 September 1940.

[66]See, for example, Molteno Papers, BC 579, S.M. Matshiqi to Molteno, 18 April 1940.

[67]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 10 October 1934, p. 37. In a similar vein, a crèche was withdrawn from the Presbyterian vestry in 1951 as a result of an administrative dispute between the Women's Association of the church and the staff of the crèche. See 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/16, minutes of the NAC, 2 July 1951, p. 1421.

[68]Cape Times, 7 May 1947; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, p. 388.

[69]J. Hyslop, "The Concepts of Reproduction and Resistance in the Sociology of Education: The Case of

circumstances, a different perspective of African schooling was emerging amongst the more progressive petty bourgeoisie by the mid-1940s. Their critical reaction towards mission education accorded more closely with their more utilitarian, socio-economic and political needs. Consequently, mission educational practice produced cleavages between conservative petty bourgeois defenders of the mission-based system, and a growing petty bourgeois element of progressive, secular schooling supporters.

Similarly, as early as the 1930s, some of more progressive elements were already questioning the closed and trusteeship character of certain religious-based cultural activities, even from within the middle-class-orientated organisations. Some, like Solomon Mbeki, challenged the paternalism and unequal nature of these institutions. Being one of the organisers of a large troop of boys in 1946, Mbeki sought, if unsuccessfully, to defy the Pathfinder regulations by refusing to accept anything less than full Boy Scout status and privileges for his group. At the time, Mbeki was marginalised by the movement for his aspirations of scouting equality, following close surveillance and prejudicial action by Sims, the Pathfinder Scout Commissioner, who conspired with Superintendent Rogers to oust the defiant Pathfinder troop leader. Mbeki was eventually forced to abandon the movement entirely, after having suffered demotions at the expense of conservative African Pathfinder leaders, such as Magodla a teacher at Langa High, and having been harshly obstructed from procuring Boy Scouts' supplies from the local Scout shop in Cape Town.[70] Dissenting views grew in popularity, especially as political forces shifted to the left from around the mid-1940s, as a growing number of progressive petty bourgeois leaders began to criticise what they perceived to be the self-serving religious and class interests of organisations like the

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the Transition from 'Missionary' to 'Bantu' Education 1940-1955", (Paper presented at the ASSA Conference, Cape Town, 1985).

[70]AWC 3/6 125, Sims to Rogers, 12 April 1946 and 24 February 1947; ibid., Rogers to Sims, 8 August 1946.

CPASC, BSC and AUCDWC. In their efforts to identify with marginalised working-class elements, they became conscious of the elitist and paternalistic nature of Christian cultural functions which failed to resonate with the rurally-orientated interests and needs of the migrant culture of the barracks and flats. In this movement, they stepped up their appeal to authorities to make provision for large-scale public and commercialised recreation for a broader cross-section of Langa residents.

2.3 The later development of elitist African Christian nationalist culture

With official authorities from around the mid-1940s still not prepared to develop organised entertainment and cultural institutions, the Christian elite and the respectable churches inevitably remained the dominant cultural mediators during this period. In line with the important intellectual shifts taking place in the mission and *yokwenyani* churches from around the mid-1940s, which sought to reaffirm the "positive" features of African customs and traditions, the black Christian petty bourgeoisie became newly encouraged to revive African cultural and celebratory movements in Langa, within the integrating framework of Christianity. As a result, the African celebratory organisations which were to emerge from around the mid-1940s, worked to revive previously dormant symbols of ethnic tradition and loyalty, yet tried to position these within a broader African Christian nationalism which was supposed to transcend ethnic divisions.

With both white and black mission and *yokwenyani* clergy in Langa promoting theological liberalism and Social Gospel principles, with a clear focus on the remaking of African culture in the 1940s, it was not surprising that the more staunch among respectable Christians sought a revival and expansion of ethnic relations with traditional chiefs and African cultural celebratory

movements. Apart from Social Gospel influences, the growing threat of an independent proletarian mass and the increasing political marginalisation of conservative Christians during the war years, dictated that a concerted effort be made by moderates to reassert their positions of status and privilege by deepening cultural relations with traditional chiefs and ethnic associations. Especially given their loss of dominance over Langa community politics to progressive elements within the NLL, ANC and CPSA during the early 1940s, the politically conservative Christian elite was motivated to exploit other forms of socio-cultural power open to a respectable class. Churches remained strongly ethnically based in Langa, with congenial links with traditional chiefs in the Reserves which dated to the rural missionary era. As a matter of course, receptions for paramount chiefs were still held in the various mission and *yokwenyani* churches in the 1930s and 1940s.[71] The cultivation of these ethnic loyalties therefore became an obvious source of social influence and prestige. Consequently, the moderate Christian elite proved to be the primary initiators of the introduction of traditional cultural celebrations in Langa, which they encouraged traditional leaders to attend. This was in opposition to a growing element of politically active and progressive petty bourgeois Christians and non-Christians, who were unreservedly critical about the revival of ethnic identities which expressed inherent "ambiguities of dependence" (to use Shula Marks's phrase).[72]

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[71] Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, notes, 13 July 1941. These receptions continued to be hosted by the *yokwenyani* churches into the 1950s. See AWC 3/73 51, programmes, 30 October 1955 and 21 April 1956. By the 1940s, these receptions had developed into elaborate affairs. The functions included a procession, choir-singing, prayers and speeches by local clergy, the Township Superintendent, the Mayor and the Native Commissioner. The visit of the Ndlambe chief in July 1941, for example, was honoured by an especially ostentatious occasion. After lively hymn-singing and respectful prayers offered up by Rev. Citashe, the reception even included a chiefly inspection of a "guard of honour" – in this case, a Girl Wayfarers' troop.

[72] S. Marks, The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa. Class, Nationalism, and the State in Twentieth Century Natal, (Johannesburg, Ravan, 1986).

The Mfengu Memorial Association (MMA) was the first of these organisations to be launched in Langa in February 1943 by mostly Mfengu *amatopi* of a respectable and churchgoing, middle-aged to elderly background. The conservative LAB council nominee, G. Nongauza, was its first chairman, with other moderate Christians such as G. Boqwana, P. Zuma, J. Mafu and C.J. Nabe represented on the Executive Committee.[73] From 1943, the MMA staged the celebration of Mfengu Day, which came to be commemorated annually on 14 May in the township.[74] Initially, the emergence of the Mfengu Day celebrations provoked strong opposition from both non-Mfengu conservative petty bourgeois Christians and progressive political activists, for its perceived early emphasis on engendering Mfengu-Xhosa animosity and divisions within Langa. However, the commemorative event soon received general conservative, elitist Christian support, if somewhat indirectly at times, as perceptions changed about the intent of its more national and inclusive Christian character.

The initial resistance by largely non-Mfengu elitist Christians to the Mfengu Day celebrations related very closely to the historical origins and foundations of the traditional event itself. Essentially, the festival sought to acknowledge and acclaim the founding history of the Mfengu. The Mfengu considered their forefathers to have been part of the 17 000 refugees, who had fled from Shaka southwards during the *mfecane* wars, only to have been "enslaved" under the Gcaleka-Xhosa. On 14 May 1835, they were supposedly "liberated" by the British army and missionaries, and taken from Butterworth to Peddie in the eastern Cape. There, they pledged their famous three oaths. They promised to be loyal to the British Government, to educate their

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[73] AWC 3/25 228, Fingo Day publication, 13 May 1943.

[74] Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 28.

children and to adhere to the teachings of the Christian religion.[75] Although the celebration sought primarily to pay homage to the founding fathers of the Mfengu, it also stirred up age-old sources of contention between the Mfengu and Xhosa. The fact that the Mfengu considered themselves to have been emancipated from Xhosa oppression by the British army led to much Xhosa animosity. That the war between the Gcaleka-Xhosa and the British, from which the Mfengu had been liberated, had effectively destroyed Xhosa power and structures, only contributed further to the resentment and bitterness of the Xhosa. Since the Gcaleka defeat of 1835, many contemporary Xhosa had thus viewed the Mfengu with contempt and labelled them as "sell-outs" and "traitors who sold us to the whites".[76]

In its very historical constitution, the Mfengu celebrations therefore awakened ethnic hostilities and tensions. The fact that the Memorial Association initially appeared to justify its existence in language offensive to the Xhosa further fuelled the divisive passions of ethnic loyalty.[77] This led moderate Christian ministers, such as Rev. Citashe, to be an early critic of the resurgence of

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[75]Molteno Papers, BC 579, A24.239, Guzawa, Secretary of the Fingo Union, to Molteno; Cape Times, 6 May 1949. It is important to note, however, that the historical origins of the Mfengu are under dispute amongst historians. Claims to the British emancipation of a people who came to be known as the Mfengu are considered mythical by some historians. It is alleged that such claims provided a smokescreen to conceal the illegal labour practices of the colonists. For the debate, see A. Webster, "Unmasking the Fingo: The War of 1935 Revisited", in C. Hamilton (ed.), The Mfecane Aftermath: Reconstructive Debates in Southern African History, (Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg, Witwatersrand University Press and University of Natal Press, 1995); J.B. Peires, "Matiwane's Road to Mbholompho: A reprieve for the Mfecane?", (Paper prepared for The "Mfecane" Aftermath: Towards a New Paradigm, University of the Witwatersrand, 6-9 September 1991).

[76]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Mfengu celebration notes.

[77]See The Bantu Forum, "Inkundla Ya Bantu", 30 June 1943. Notice that H.S.E. Bikitsha, General Secretary of Mfengu Day Memorial Celebrations, the national Mfengu Day body, suggested that the Langa Mfengu branch was not associated with his committee. He thus deplored the offensive language and dissociated his organisation from the Langa body. At the same time, however, he argued that he was not in possession of all the relevant facts to condemn the Langa organisation completely. He suggested that those in opposition to the movement such as the All African Convention should not interfere in such matters, considering that no great quarrels had arisen between Xhosa and Mfengu since the introduction of the

ethnicity embodied in the Mfengu movement. Along with political opposition from the Langa Vigilance Association, the All African Convention and the Langa Advisory Board, petty bourgeois Christians and concerned residents like Citashe made deputations to Rogers and the City Council to try to check the establishment of an ethnic organisation that, in their view, would set an "unfortunate" precedent in Langa.[78] Rogers, however, favoured the introduction of the celebrations and sought to employ the tactics of "divide and rule". In line with NAD perceptions, he pursued the contemporary departmental wisdom which promoted the use of ethnicity for conservative and exclusivist ends. Ethnicity was considered to be the ideal counterweight to the development of working class and nationalist consciousness. Subsequently, Rogers made certain that the celebrations went ahead peacefully for the first time on 14 May 1943, in the belief that he was counteracting radicalism by promoting a well-recognised moderate event. To this end, Rogers even circumvented the Advisory Board, knowing its hostile attitudes towards the celebrations. In this way, he ignored a basic provision of the Urban Areas Act which stipulated the referral of such issues of township concern to the local Advisory Board.[79] Instead, by finding support amongst many of the Mfengu Association founding members, who were also mainly in the employment of the Langa township administration, Rogers was quick to ensure that their preferences were granted.[80]

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celebrations in 1907. In this way, Bikitsha manifested his inclusive middle class African Christian attitudes.

[78]The Bantu Forum, 30 June 1943; AWC 3/25 228, Ntshinga, Ngwevela, Damane and others to Rogers, 19 February 1943; ibid., Rogers to Nongauza, 20 February 1943; ibid., Acting Town Clerk to Councillor Quirk, 29 March 1943; ibid., Rogers to Citashe, 21 April 1943; ibid., Langa Vigilance Association to Native Affairs Committee, 8 April 1943; Molteno Papers, BC 579, document A24.241 and document A24.244.

[79]Molteno Papers, BC 579, document A24.241.

[80]AWC 3/25 228, Citashe to Rogers, 15 April 1943.

Under the watchful presence of a number of official wardsmen, the first Mfengu celebration in Langa went ahead uneventfully and, in fact, drew considerable support from both semi-urbanised and migrant workers, as well as elitist Mfengu. Over 1000 Africans from various parts of the Peninsula gathered for the occasion, thus setting a pattern of high attendance that would be maintained for many years until late in the 1950s.[81] Realising the attraction of such a "traditional" event and its opportunity for extending elitist cultural dominance and power over the growing number of semi-urbanised and migrant workers in the western Cape, most moderate Christians over time became tolerant of, and even reconciled to, the staging of the Mfengu celebrations. It was argued that since the Mfengu customary festival was framed within Christian symbolism, it had the potential of being "inclusive" to all on the basis of a wider Christian appeal. The fact that the Mfengu organisers later made concerted efforts to enhance the ceremony with a more national and inclusive Christian character, especially contributed to the acceptance of the celebrations amongst the Christian elite. In this regard, founding members were careful to adopt *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* as the main song at the celebrations in order to provide a more national flavour. Interdenominational children's services were also introduced as a means of fostering ethnic collaboration and unity, and a Xhosa representative was even invited to make an address on the occasion.[82]

Already by 1944, as a result of these unitary and conciliatory gestures on the part of the Mfengu Memorial Association members and the event's actual success, the initial antagonism from non-Mfengu, elitist Christian moderates had been replaced by quiet acknowledgement and occasionally even defence of the event. In that year, both the Ministers' Association and a new splinter and

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[81] Cape Times, 17 May 1943 and 14 May 1959.

[82] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Mfengu celebrations; Cape Times, 14 May 1959.

minister-led Vigilance Association (formed partly on the basis of its recognition of the Mfengu celebrations as opposed to the antagonistic views of other political groups)[83] took up the Mfengu Memorial Association's cause in campaigning for its rightful existence. To this end, these bodies castigated the "anti-tribalism" of the All African Convention, the Langa Vigilance Association and the communist-dominated Advisory Board by arguing that "too much" had been made of the Mfengu Day affair, which had, in turn, led to a division of opposing camps in Langa. In their view, the Mfengu should be "left alone" to celebrate their cultural history in peace. Despite his initial aversion to the resurgence of ethnicity embodied in the Mfengu movement, even Rev. Citashe, as the major mobilising force behind the splinter Vigilance Association, had already shifted his position. By 1944, he was falling in behind the apparent view of the township authorities that it was, in fact, the opposing bodies which were stoking ethnic hatred by overstating the matter.[84] Clearly, it did not take long for the conservative Christian elite to rally around a compromise consensus over the Mfengu Day affair. By the mid-1940s, they had accepted the inherent ambiguity between the promotion of Mfengu ethnicity, along with the proselytisation of an inclusive African Christian nationalism. By contrast, the increasingly influential progressive political leadership – which included both petty bourgeois Christians and non-Christians – remained adamantly opposed to the revival of ethnic loyalties, which was perceived as obstructing the drive for a more representative African nationalism. These distinctive cultural attitudes reflected the growing disparities taking place between conservative and progressive groupings in the Langa political realm.

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[83] See ch. 3 (3.2) for further discussion on the formation of this body.

[84] AWC 3/72 44, Vigilance Association document, 1944.

The socio-cultural and political nature and functions of the celebrations themselves changed very little over the 1940s and 1950s, with a fixed and regular programme being pursued. The celebrations lasted from two to three days and included ethnic dancing, feasts, concerts and finally a religious service when the three oaths were revised. In the lead up to the closing church service, a symbolic march was made to re-enact the emancipation of the Mfengu in 1835, from their conditions of slavery under the Gcaleka in Butterworth, to their new-found freedom and protection from the British in Peddie. Local Mfengu, clad in traditional regalia, enthusiastically participated in the bundle-carrying ceremony and procession as they made their way from the outskirts of Langa to the market hall. At the final destination, stories, songs, traditional histories, legends and speeches which lauded the Mfengu, were delivered with great passion and spirit, which were reportedly equally well received and appreciated by supporters, in providing for them a sense of religious belonging and ethnic identity.[85]

The religious service on the final day brought the celebrations to their climax and conclusion with the focus of communal attention upon the revision of the vows. It was an occasion to demonstrate loyalty to the Crown and gratitude for the "benefits" enjoyed under British rule. Re-commitments and dedications to the missionaries, education, civilisation and westernisation were also recurring themes. In this way, the ceremony of the vows was taken entirely within mission Christian symbolism, ensuring that the movement, despite its ethnic character, remained strongly inflected by white colonisation. As President and Chaplain of the Mfengu Committee for a lengthy term of office, Rev. J. Xibenye presided over most services during the 1940s and 1950s, in which he routinely stressed loyalty to the government, and called for the furtherance of unity, education,

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[85] Cape Times, 17 May 1943 and 6 May 1949; Kondlo, "The Culture and Religion of the People of Langa", p. 39.

religion, industry and character.[86] Interestingly, until the 1960s,[87] few *yokwenyani* ministers actually took an active part in conducting the service. Although they had come to tolerate and acknowledge the "rightful" staging of Mfengu Day by the mid-1940s, they preferred to give their wholehearted and energetic support to the establishment of another cultural celebration, Ntsikana Day, as a more appropriate and unitary African Christian movement.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the Mfengu movement thus functioned in a moderate fashion, both culturally and politically, owing to its historical origins and associations with early nineteenth-century missionary and westernising influences. The invited and honorary attendance of Mfengu chiefs from various parts of the country,[88] as well as government and township authorities, further established this ethos. Traditional chiefs were made especially welcome and encouraged to take the lead in celebratory proceedings. In line with the principles of African Christian nationalism, they took the opportunity in official addresses to emphasise the importance of governmental loyalty and unity between ethnic groups, especially between the Xhosa and Mfengu. These sentiments were echoed by the invited Xhosa representative in 1952, Chief Hoyi, when he declared that the attainment of such cordial ethnic relations could provide a basis to cement unity between all nations.[89] At the same time, local and state government officials, like Rogers and Native Commissioner Parsons, made use of the podium in the 1940s and 1950s to promote the values of high moral family living, industry and character as a means of taking one's

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[86]AWC 3/25 228, Lwana to Rogers, 4 May 1945; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/10, minutes of the NAC, 9 March 1943, p. 213.

[87]AWC 3/25 228, programmes, 1967, 1968 and 1973.

[88]J. Hodgson, "Ntsikana: History and Symbol. Studies in a Process of Religious Change among Xhosa-Speaking People", (University of Cape Town, Ph. D. thesis, 1985), vol. II, p. 440.

[89]Cape Times, 19 May 1952.

place as citizens of the broader South African community.[90] Rogers also always made sure to provide wardsmen at the annual celebratory functions in order to guarantee the maintenance of order, and, especially, to prevent intimidation from any opposing radical elements.[91] In collaboration with the Mfengu Memorial Association, he was further able to organise the attendance of the Native Military Corps, along with the services of the military band.[92] In contributing to the moderate flavour of the commemoration, it was fundamentally due to Rogers's advice, too, that the Mfengu committee provided scholarships at Langa High, in accordance with their education pledge, and made donations towards department pre-school feeding funds.[93] Clearly, this conservative alignment of the Mfengu Memorial Association with the interests of traditional chiefs and state authorities, served both the conservative Mfengu elite in their quest for cultural standing, as well as the chiefs and state administration in their determination to extend their political influence.

The commemoration of Ntsikana Day was the second celebratory and customary function to emerge in Langa in 1944, soon after the introduction of Mfengu Day in 1943. In essence, the commemorative event celebrated the memory of Ntsikana as the "first" Christian and patron saint of the Xhosa. Ntsikana was the son of one of Nqika's councillors. An early convert associated with the beginnings of missionary work in the eastern Cape, he was believed to have been influenced by hearing the missionary, Johannes Theodorus van der Kemp. He became an influential evangelist at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and urged his people to embrace

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[90]See, for example, Cape Times, 19 May 1952.

[91]See, for example, AWC 3/25 228, Nongauza to Rogers, 13 May 1943.

[92]AWC 3/25 228, Rogers to Organising Committee, Fingo celebrations, 21 March 1945.

[93]AWC 3/25 228, Rogers to Nongauza, 17 June 1949; ibid., notes by Rogers, 16 June 1947.

Christianity and to educate their children. He also taught his followers to repent of the sins of witchcraft and sorcery, and thus played a preparatory role with regard to African acceptance of Christianity. At the same time, however, he did not completely propagate the wholesale acceptance of white Christian culture. He criticised white culture as distinct from Christianity on the basis of his affirmation of the Xhosa way of life. In this way, he sought to acquire the benefits of the new, while retaining his African cultural identity, thus introducing a form of African Christian syncretism. For this reason, he was particularly significant to Xhosa and African Christians alike, as one of the first persons intent on being a Christian while remaining an African. Ntsikana proclaimed the action of God in the historical process and emphasised grace for change within the historical order, so that he himself during the nineteenth century was seen as being dedicated to evolutionary development rather than radical change. Popularly, he had come to be regarded as an indigenous forerunner of Christianity, who had received his insights independently of the missionaries. Significantly, Ntsikana was believed to have prophesied the coming of the whites with their bibles and money.[94]

Ntsikana Day celebrations in southern Africa dated to the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with its origins in the rise of Xhosa nationalism in that era. Initially, Ntsikana Memorial associations, located primarily in the eastern Cape, were motivated by the modernising Xhosa elite, who sought to promote Ntsikana as a symbol of Xhosa unity. Being steeped in ethnic tradition, yet within an acceptable Christian context, Xhosa consciousness and cultural nationalism thus featured as the primary concerns of the early movements.[95] This ethnically-

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[94]B.A. Pauw, Christianity and Xhosa Tradition: Belief and Ritual among Xhosa-Speaking Christians, (Cape Town and New York, Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 19; AWC 3/49 229, general invitation from Mguqulwa, Secretary of the Saint Ntsikana Memorial Organisation, 7 April 1955; Hodgson, "Ntsikana: History and Symbol", vol. 1, pp. iii, iv, vol. 2, p. 401.

[95]Hodgson, "Ntsikana: History and Symbol", vol. 2, pp. 408, 414.

centred trend was reflected in the initial Ntsikana Day celebrations held in Langa, since the introduction of the Ntsikana Day commemoration in the township appears to have been instigated as a conservative and elitist Xhosa response to the emergence of the Mfengu movement with its own particular early ethnic emphasis. It is significant, for example, that 14 March was chosen as the day on which to celebrate Ntsikana as the "first" Christian, to upstage the Mfengu function held two months later on 14 May. This strict promotion of ethnic particularism, though, encountered widespread opposition, mainly from progressive elements in the ANC, CPSA, LVA and LAB, and was also queried by the local *yokwenyani* clergy and leading conservative churchmen. By the mid-1940s, most *yokwenyani* clergy had come to adopt the alternative, unitary ideological message which had been promoted and developed by various Ntsikana Memorial associations in the Cape. Rather than focus on ethnic and cultural differences, these memorial associations sought to establish Ntsikana as a symbol of wider African unity by representing him as the patron saint of all African people. Essentially, with the growing threat to socio-cultural and political rights of Africans, these associations had identified the need for the development of a national African unity that would overcome ethnic particularism. Thus, by the 1940s, many Ntsikana associations had come to reflect this wider African nationalism centred around the Christian framework, where Christianity was viewed as the integrating force with the ability to transcend many ethnic divisions.[96] Realising the inherent possibilities for Ntsikana Day to function in the advancement of an inclusive African Christian nationalism in Langa in line with other Cape memorial associations, *yokwenyani* ministers and certain leading Christians lobbied for a change in the direction and structure of the celebrations in the township.

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[96]Hodgson, "Ntsikana: History and Symbol", vol. 2, pp. 414, 430.

By 1945, through the greater involvement and influence of the local *yokwenyani* clergy and a more broadly representative element of leading churchmen from the respectable religious institutions, the Ntsikana Memorial Organisation (NMO) in Langa thus came to steer the cultural event along broader lines of African unity, within the framework of an inclusive African Christian nationalism rather than ethnic separation. From this time onwards, the local *yokwenyani* clergy in particular played a significant role in the organisation and shaping of the character of the commemorative event. Between 1947 and 1960, virtually all the ministers represented on the *yokwenyani* Ministers' Association were involved in some way in either the planning or proceedings of Ntsikana Day.[97] To a far greater degree than the particular ideological framework of the Mfengu Day celebrations, they were convinced that Ntsikana Day could serve to represent "all bantudom".[98] As a consequence, they threw their full support and weight behind the NMO, compared to their half-hearted acceptance and quiet tolerance of Mfengu Day. Apart from his symbolic unitary appeal, the *yokwenyani* ministers and the respectable Christian elite were also attracted by Ntsikana as an important marker of integration between the old and new traditions. For them, Ntsikana offered a path of peaceful change and progress along non-violent Christian lines, without necessarily endangering the preservation of Xhosa and African culture as a whole in the new emerging world. With these ideological objectives in mind, these elitist *yokwenyani* Christians thus sought to introduce new character and meaning to the Ntsikana celebratory occasion.

Of fundamental importance towards the transformation of the festival was the introduction of an interdenominational service, to which invitations were extended to local clergy and their

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[97]See AWC 3/49 229, programmes, 24 April 1949, 1 April 1951, 24 April 1955, 22 April 1956 and 13 April 1958.

[98]Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 142.

congregations from the broad range of largely ethnically-based churches in Langa. Most ministers, together with their church representatives, attended the service so that the occasion came to symbolise broader Christian ecumenism and unity in the name of Ntsikana, the "first convert". Both invited ministers and chiefly representatives were encouraged by the Memorial Committee to make interdenominationalism, and ethnic and inter-racial unity the central themes of their addresses. The contributions of the Rev. S.P. Lediga of the PC as an ethnic intermediary were particularly important in fostering a spirit of harmony, unanimity and co-operation. On account of his Pedi origins, the Memorial Committee identified Lediga as an invaluable link towards reconciling the local differences between the Xhosa and Mfengu. From around 1947, he was invited as a regular speaker on account of his so-called "rigid impartiality", as on occasion he castigated both Xhosa and Mfengu for their "stupidity" in continually opposing one another. Over time, his appeals for unity appear to have gained respect from both groups.[99] In a similar fashion, as a Mfengu, Rev. Maya was singled out to address the largely Xhosa audience in promoting broader unity at the Ntsikana interdenominational service.[100] Efforts towards inclusivity were also evident in the even-handed appointment of school bursaries (this education fund was started by the Memorial Committee of largely church supporters towards the end of the 1940s). Out of six scholarship bursaries granted by 1960, only two of these were made to Xhosa students with the remaining four going to a Sotho, Mfengu, coloured and "Nyasa" scholar respectively.[101] The fact that most local churches provided donations to the scholarship fund by the mid-1950s indicates

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[99]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", pp. 24, 25.

[100]Wilson Papers, BC 88, A1, box 21, interview with Rev. Maya, 1955.

[101]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Ntsikana Day notes. The term "Nyasa" was used to refer to an individual, with a distinctive African language, originating from countries north of the Limpopo. See Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 34, 36.

the wider support Ntsikana Day was gaining as a unitary celebration.[102] As an additional means of broadening the movement, official positions on the Ntsikana Memorial Organisation were made open to all. Thus, occasionally, non-Xhosa were represented on the executive, although by far the majority of officials were Xhosa, and, at no time, was there a non-Xhosa chairman.[103] In addition, the Memorial Executive made certain that locals were under no obligation to wear traditional Xhosa dress to the occasion. Generally, only the entertainers wore traditional clothes, which did not necessarily have to reflect Xhosa dress. Most people wore regular, everyday clothing. This was understood by local Africans to serve further as a means of opening the event to all.[104] Certainly, these efforts towards the encouragement of a wider unity on the part of the *yokwenyani* church-based Memorial Executive proved relatively successful over time. The annual celebrations grew in support, attracting hundreds of mixed (though largely Xhosa) Africans from the Peninsula, and as far away as the eastern Cape by the 1950s.[105] Even fairly large numbers of Mfengu began to attend the commemorative event by this time.[106] In this way, the Ntsikana Day celebrations came to be decisively favoured by the majority of the local Christian elite – both conservative and progressive – as being the most suitable and appropriate traditional symbol for the promotion of African Christian unity and inclusivity.

At the same time as promoting the celebration's unitary appeal, the urbanised and church-going Memorial Executive also took care to develop the event along moderate African and Christian

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[102]Cape Times, 26 April 1954.

[103]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Ntsikana Day notes.

[104]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Ntsikana Day notes.

[105]Cape Times Magazine, 30 April 1949, p. 12.

[106]Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 113.

cultural lines. Thus the commemoration soon came to reflect the atmosphere of a "school" and "church" function, held primarily in the interests of the elitist *amatopi* and *ooscuse-me*, as well as aspirant "school" migrant workers. Few non-churchgoing migrants from the barracks and zones in Langa participated as a result, although it was reported that there were some who identified with Ntsikana as a special force within African tradition and did attend.[107] The celebrations began with an opening procession - not unlike the mission church parades - led by the Boy Pathfinders, Wolf Cubs and adult entertainers clad in traditional costume. Customary displays, songs and plays were performed along the procession route.[108] The committee organised for the essential focus of the ceremony to centre around the religious service, which was conducted by *yokwenyani* ministers exclusively. Services were usually held in either the Methodist, Presbyterian or Congregational Churches, which, in itself, made sure that the religious ceremony was well represented by local mission Christians.[109]

By the late 1940s, an elaborate service order had developed that sought to entrench the commemoration of Ntsikana within the ideals and values of African Christian nationalism. The prescribed annual readings emanated from Matthew 5:1-12 (the Sermon on the Mount) and Nehemiah 2:1-10 (the building of Jerusalem).[110] In their sermons, ministers used these readings consistently during the late 1940s and 1950s, to appeal to Ntsikana's path of evolutionary change and progress within the context of Christ's love and charity, and Nehemiah's forbearance and endurance. In the plethora of speeches which followed, listeners were repeatedly exhorted to

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[107]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Ntsikana Day notes; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 28.

[108]Cape Times Magazine, 30 April 1949, p. 12; AWC 3/49 229, general invitation from Mguqulwa, 7 April 1955.

[109]AWC 3/49 229, programmes, 1955-1958.

[110]See, for example, AWC 3/49 229, programmes, 1955 and 1956.

unify and progress according to the basic religious and moral principles of the Christian religion so faithfully pursued by Ntsikana. Education was also exalted as the key to this peaceful path of renewal and change so that the final collection for the higher education scholarship fund - started in 1947 and repeated annually thereafter - received generous donations at the end of the service.[111]

With a moderate Protestant ethic and Christian liberalism so dominant within the nature and context of the local Ntsikana ceremony, it was not surprising that the NMO, like the MMA, developed close relations with traditional chiefs and the township administration. The involvement of *amakosi* and township officials served to establish the commemoration as a peaceful and unitary event that in effect sought to conform to the incorporationist ideal of the Cape liberal tradition. Chiefs Sandile, Hoyi, Anta, Gaika and Njokweni were regular honorary dignitaries invited to the ceremony in the 1950s. The *amakosi* generally made appeals for ethnic and inter-racial unity among the white, black and coloured population groups in their addresses, just as Ntsikana had taught the ancestors the need for fellowship and friendship. In 1953, for example, in the context of an increasingly repressive and racist regime, Chief Hoyi still prayerfully pleaded that the victorious Nationalist Party would foster "the unity of all races, irrespective of language and colour, and have the interests of all at heart".[112]

Invitations to sympathetic whites and government officials were also considered to be of cordial and symbolic importance by the NMO in promoting the values of brotherhood, harmony and co-

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[111]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Ntsikana Day notes; Cape Times, 26 April 1954; AWC 3/49 229, Rogers to Native Commissioner, 6 April 1949; Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 114.

[112]Cape Times, 14 April 1953; AWC 3/49 229, programmes, 24 April 1955 and 28 April 1957.

operation inherent in Ntsikana's approach. Thus the Mayor, City Councillors, the Native Commissioner, the Native Representatives, the Township Superintendent and prominent liberals were regular invited guests to the celebrations throughout the late 1940s and 1950s. Invitations were even extended to the broader white community in the Peninsula by means of advertisements in the Argus, Cape Times and Die Burger.[113] In their speeches, government officials generally tended to emphasise the practice of Ntsikana's Christian values of patience, loving kindness, honesty, mutual respect and tolerance as being critical to the solution of South Africa's racial problems. As Native Commissioner of the Cape Peninsula in 1953, Parsons argued even at this late stage, that the pursuit of such moral principles by local Africans could result in the establishment of a Christian South African social order that might well serve as a "wonderful and reconciliatory" solution to the world's racial and cultural divisions and conflicts.[114] Such official orations and declarations were usually well received by Ntsikana supporters. As "head of the *labi* (community)", Rogers was always warmly thanked for his contributory remarks and presence, which were described as having "a sobering effect" on the gathering and understood to have contributed towards "a quiet and dignified" atmosphere.[115]

For their part, the township authorities were supportive of the celebrations from their very inception. Initially, as a Xhosa reaction to the introduction of Mfengu Day, local officials favoured the staging of the Ntsikana commemoration as it accorded with their promotion of ethnicity as part of an anti-nationalist "divide and rule" policy.[116] Equally, once the *yokwenyani* clergy had

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[113] See AWC 3/49 229, Mguqulwa to Rogers, 5 February 1951; Cape Times, 10 April 1953.

[114] Cape Times, 14 April 1953.

[115] AWC 3/49 229, S. Tshwete, Secretary of the Saint Ntsikana Memorial Committee, to Rogers, 24 April 1945; ibid., Mguqulwa to Rogers, 12 March 1950.

[116] AWC 3/49 229, S. Tshwete, Secretary of the Saint Ntsikana Memorial Committee, to Rogers, 24 April 1945.

transformed the character of the celebrations, township authorities continued to sanction the event in the name of racial harmony and co-operation. As part of the official support, Rogers again guaranteed that wardsmen were posted to ensure that the events went ahead peacefully. Towards the end of the 1940s and during the early 1950s, Rogers was, however, concerned about the political influence of the ANC on the local Ntsikana movement. This fear arose first, out of the 1947 celebrations when Rev. J. A. Calata of the Cradock Anglican Church was invited to address the Langa ceremony as President of the National Committee of Ntsikana Day Celebrations. At the time, Calata was also President of the Cape ANC. Calata brought a critical edge to the proceedings when he strongly petitioned for the removal of racial barriers in South African society by arguing that "racialism" had never entered into Ntsikana's teachings. He went on to solicit local support for the sending of a delegation to the United Nations to plead for African rights in South Africa. In response to such political rhetoric, Rogers became acutely distressed about the ideological direction of the commemoration, fearing that the occasion would simply be used for political purposes.[117]

Calata's challenging approach, however, was not taken further by the relatively staid NMO Committee. Although some Langa ministers did follow Calata's example to use the festival as an opportunity to campaign for the acknowledgement of black rights, such demands were usually stressed obliquely within a framework of conservative African Christian nationalism, based on inter-racial consultation and peaceful reconciliation. Such calls hardly constituted a serious challenge to the existing order. In any case, the dominant emphasis of the celebrations remained primarily religious and sought, fundamentally, to contribute towards a collaborative and harmonious spirit.[118] Thus, although the unitary framework of the local Ntsikana Day celebrations

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[117]AWC 3/49 229, Rogers to Native Commissioner, 6 April 1949.

[118]Cape Times, 26 April 1954; Hammond-Tooke, "Six Native Churches", p. 114; AWC 3/49

provided possibilities for the mobilisation of residents along the lines of African cultural and Christian commitments, the fact that the commemoration essentially remained bound within the standards of western Christianity, gradualism and progress, restricted its broader political and cultural appeal.

Following the establishment of Mfengu Day and Ntsikana Day in Langa, Moshesh celebrations emerged in the late 1940s at the instigation of conservative and "respectable" Sotho Christians from the Sotho-based DRC to commemorate traditional tribal history. In sum, the memorial remembered the incorporation of Basutoland into the British Empire on 12 March 1868 by Sir Philip Wodehouse, Governor of the Cape Colony, after Moshesh had sought British protection against the advances of the Boers. The commemoration sought to extol the benefits of the paternal guidance and protection of the British Empire, which included preferential access to Christianity, civilisation and westernisation. At the same time, the occasion served to glorify the wisdom and fortitude of Sotho chiefs such as Moshesh, who had displayed their diplomatic skills and acumen in securing the survival of the Sotho nation.

Although, like Mfengu Day, the Moshesh Memorial tended to be more exclusivist historically and narrowly-rooted along ethnic lines, the fact that the elite Memorial Committee sought to make the event more widely appealing and broadly representative meant that it was, at least, tolerated amongst the local clergy and conservative Christians. This was achieved by inviting chairmen of the Ntsikana and Mfengu Day associations, as well as a wide range of local clergy, to address the religious ceremony. As a result of such invitations, a few respectable ministers, such as the Reverends Mafata and Lediga, even took part in leading the commemorative service, along with

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229, Mguqulwa to Rogers, 12 March 1950.

clergy from the Dutch Reformed Church.[119] The event, though, was never as enthusiastically patronised by the range of *yokwenyani* ministers and their adherents, as in the case of Ntsikana Day, despite the fact that the event was acknowledged as a legitimate form of African Christian celebration. Still, like the Mfengu Memorial, the Moshesh Day celebrations were well attended by mainly conservative petty bourgeois and "school" migrant working-class Sotho Christians, who supported the event into the 1950s.[120]

As with other festivals, the Moshesh celebrations centred around the memorial service, which included the delivery of hymns, prayers, sermons, speeches, choir-singing and traditional plays.[121] Leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church played a prominent role on account of the fact that the denomination was composed of virtually all the Sotho Christians in Langa.[122] The DRC ministers, together with *yokwenyani* clergy like Lediga, used the occasion to praise Sotho chiefs of the past and present, and to reflect upon the "advantages" of Christianity and civilisation as introduced under the "paternal care" of the British.[123] Again both traditional Sotho chiefs and the authorities were prominently involved in the proceedings. Superintendent Rogers, Chief Mama and the High

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[119]AWC 3/76 230, programme, 1949.

[120]Botto, "Some Aspects of the Leisure Occupations", p. 141; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 35.

[121]See, for example, AWC 3/76 230, programmes, 12 March 1949 and 11 March 1950.

[122]Cape Times, 16 March 1959; AWC 3/76 230, programme, 1950; ibid., Sello to Manager of Native Affairs, Langa, 25 February 1963.

[123]AWC 3/76 230, programmes, 1949 and 1950.

Commissioner of Basutoland usually delivered speeches in the late 1940s and 1950s. Once more the presence of a protective police patrol was assured by the township officials.[124]

With the control of these customary celebrations firmly in their hands during the 1940s and early 1950s, the conservative Christian elite was able to establish the parameters of a moderate African Christian nationalist culture and, at the same time, bolster their position of cultural privilege. By leading the process of reviving the ethnic associations, they were able to connect with the ethnic-based migrant culture of "school" working-class elements in the Peninsula and to draw them into the mission sphere of influence. In addition, especially through their management of the Ntsikana celebrations, they were able to draw in and combine with progressive petty bourgeois elements in the common aim of promoting a non-violent and unified African Christian nationalism. At the same time, though, particularly by hosting the Mfengu and Moshesh festivals, they became further divided from a number of more politically active progressive Christians and non-Christians alike, who criticised the ethnic base of these memorials as restricting the development of a wider religious and African unity. In addition, their administration of these commemorations as mainly "school" and "church" events, especially alienated non-churchgoing and traditionalist migrants from the barracks and zones, with whom the functions failed to resonate because of their white Christian symbolism. Consequently, the cultivation of ethnic loyalties and traditions, critical to the development of mission ideology in the 1940s and 1950s, brought diverse effects related to the obvious ambiguities inherent within the goals and practice of the emerging African Christian nationalist culture. These contradictions would be increasingly exposed and challenged by both radical and progressive political forces in the 1950s in Langa.

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[124]AWC 3/76 230, programmes, 12 March 1949 and 11 March 1950; ibid., Ntsukunyane, Shasha, Tsilyane and Tsekoa to Rogers, 12 December 1949.

2.4 The further establishment of Christian petty bourgeois-orientated associations

Elitist voluntary organisations continued to emerge in Langa in the late 1940s and early 1950s to perpetuate mission cultural ideals in continuity with already established, religious-based cultural movements and networks. The formation of these associations was largely a response from conservative and progressive social groups alike, to the increasing incidence of crime, theft and "juvenile delinquency" in this period. For the conservative Christian elite, it was an additional attempt to reassert its socio-cultural power in the township, at a time when the balance of local African political forces had shifted perceptibly to the left.

Until the late 1940s, the provision of social, educational and cultural facilities was recognised by urbanised residents as drastically curtailing the extent of petty crime, violence and hooliganism in Langa. Partly as a result of this elite church influence, which was supported by the grip of the official Langa administrative authorities, the township was known as one of the most peaceful black communities throughout South Africa, and even considered to be "snobbish" by African outsiders.[125] However, the late 1940s saw a marked increase in the recurrence of petty crime: mainly minor assaults, theft and gambling. Township authorities generally ascribed this new phenomenon to the "growing problem of juvenile delinquency and *tsotsism*", the broader social causes of which usually went unexplored by local government officials. Rogers, for example, simply considered semi-educated, unemployed youths to be the symptomatic problem. He argued that since young boys could not easily find employment having left school, they were left idle to

[125]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 32.

"become nuisances generally".[126] Yet, rising criminal incidents emerged in the context of increasingly alienating living circumstances in Langa. By the late 1940s, living conditions were declining drastically as residential segregation patterns were tightened following the growing housing crisis caused by the rapid urbanisation of the war years. With the firming up of influx control measures and the introduction of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy in the 1950s, the local African community was faced with increasing work pressures and socio-legal insecurities, which fed the context for the rise of petty crime and "juvenile delinquency".[127] The Christian elite responded to this new "unnecessary evil" of "hooliganism" by seeking new forms of social entertainment and organisation to capture the leisure time of a growing breed of "anti-social" types. Again, their solutions continued to be based on respectable middle-class institutions and agendas which stressed Christian improvement, sociability and benevolence, and which depended on the support of liberal whites and township authorities.

The Langa Parents Association (LPA) was the first such organisation to emerge in 1948 with the explicit purpose of combating the recent spate of perceived "juvenile delinquency, acts of violence, assaults without provocation . . . house-breaking, theft, highway robbery, gambling and hooliganism" in Langa.[128] Essentially, the Association was led by middle-class urbanised residents – both conservative and progressive - with a Christian background. Significantly, this group was more progressive in nature than the staunchly conservative and more conventional Christian character of other earlier petty bourgeois voluntary associations. Apart from the strong influence of progressive Christian and non-Christian leaders in the organisation, some of whom also had

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[126]AWC 3/59 112, Rogers to Bantu Press, Editorial Director, 14 October 1949; Cape Times, 4 December1952.

[127]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 82, 102-109, 217, 223-256.

[128]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, Langa Parents Association (LPA) Memorandum, 17 May 1948 (annexure to NAC minutes).

communist inclinations, the LPA naturally associated itself with a range of other progressive, as well as conservative organisations, such as the Langa Vigilance Association, the Ratepayers' Association, the ANC, CP, the National Council of Women of South Africa, Cape African Teachers' Association (CATA), the Ministers' Association and the Western Province Students' Association, which gave it a more forceful voice and broader critical perspective.[129] This collaboration reflected the noticeable shift towards left-wing and populist co-operation in Langa in the 1940s - a movement with which many progressive Christians, in particular, closely associated as part of a "United Front" bloc.[130] These left-wing networks were only partially radical, however, as the presence of progressive Christians within the United Front made sure that the movement remained non-violent, inter-racial, constitutional and conciliatory in nature. The LPA served as a prime example of these inherently dichotomous distinctions. On the one hand, as a more progressive organisation with close connections with a variety of left-wing groups, the LPA conformed to the growing radicalisation of this allied movement. On the other hand, as a result of its influential progressive Christian leadership, its strong Christian petty bourgeois membership and its more moderate organisational connections, the Association remained cautious and relatively conservative in character, which was particularly evident in its analysis of, and practical solutions to, the perceived problems of juvenile delinquency and petty crime in the late 1940s.

The LPA identified the "degenerate" migrant culture of the barracks and zones as being the primary source of the increasing discord and strife in Langa. In response, the Association sought to act as the vanguard for the social upliftment of migrant culture to counteract the "ill-effects" of

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[129] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, LPA Memorandum, 17 May 1948 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[130] For a more detailed discussion on the role of progressive Christians within the United Front, see ch. 3 (3.2 and 3.3).

"heathen" dances and drunken parties in the barracks. In pursuit of this, the LPA campaigned for the implementation of a range of practical projects and programmes to be delivered by the City Council. The proposals included the provision of a large community centre complex with facilities such as a lounge, library, gymnasium, entertainment hall, billiard saloon and milk bar. It was believed that such a complex could assist the Langa youth to spend their leisure time constructively and that it could become "the rendezvous and headquarters of . . . cultural life where residents and visitors could meet in congenial atmosphere and company for social intercourse and exchange of opinion for mutual improvement." The LPA also called for the provision of tertiary educational bursaries to be made available by the City Council, as well as financial aid to the Girl Wayfarers' and Boy Pathfinders' movements, the Boys' Club (probably the Dutch Reformed Boys' Club run in conjunction with the Paarden Eiland Rotary Club) and local African sport, as a means of eliminating juvenile delinquency. In addition, the Association called for the necessary services of a social worker to be employed by the City Council to promote public recreation in the township community.[131] Notably, in contrast to the conformity of other more conservative voluntary associations which preferred to be left alone to develop cultural activities along their own lines, the LPA was adamant that the CC should cover the costs and take responsibility for the public recreational development of Langa. The Association was particularly critical of the municipality's minimal degree of expenditure on social facilities, especially in relation to the public endeavour on the part of other city councils in centres like Umtata, Durban, Bloemfontein and Johannesburg by the late 1940s. The LPA decried the fact that it had been left to voluntary groups to carry the financial burdens of providing recreational

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[131] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, LPA Memorandum, 17 May 1948 (annexure to NAC minutes); SSK, S.5/2A/37, report by Hofmeyr, 30 June 1958, p. 3.

amenities and argued that it was high time that adequate facilities be made available by the Council to meet present needs.[132]

Given the context of increasing cases of petty theft and assault and growing politicisation within the township, the CC, working within a similar framework of Christian improvement, self-help and recreation, arrived at comparable solutions to the LPA. For the first time, it was now deemed necessary to become actively involved in the public institutionalisation of entertainment and cultural facilities. Partly as a means of fostering relations with the LPA, in order not to alienate such co-operative organisations in an unstable local political environment, the Council agreed to the consideration of a number of its recommendations. The possibility of establishing a community centre was explored and a revision of the 1947 Staff Grading Scheme was ordered to allow for the employment of an African social worker in Langa. Municipal proposals were also forwarded to the relevant committees in 1948 with a view to establishing bursaries for African social workers, as well as a grant-in-aid for African sport in Langa.[133] Although municipal plans for the community centre failed to materialise, due to claimed financial constraints related to the "bachelor" housing extensions of the 1950s,[134] a government-financed social worker was appointed to the Langa administration in 1952. The worker, Sydney Matshiqi - a former teacher and faithful mission adherent - was employed with the express purpose of combating vice, crime and juvenile delinquency.[135] In accordance with LPA proposals, his tasks included the development of adult and youth clubs, such as the Pathfinders and Wayfarers. Furthermore, he

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[132] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, LPA Memorandum, 17 May 1948, p. 372 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[133] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, minutes of the NAC, 17 May 1948, p. 372.

[134] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/18, minutes of the NAC, 29 June 1953; AWC 3/59 112, Rogers to Mrs. Overbeek, 24 March 1952.

[135] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/17, minutes of the NAC, 25 March 1952.

was required to assist Langa youth in their search for employment, as well as to help in the provision of poor relief. It was also his task to institute general controlling cultural and sporting bodies as a means of securing greater municipal authority over the emergence of particular groups and of co-ordinating the organisation of recreational activities in Langa.[136] Matshiqi would prove to be tireless as the moving spirit behind a range of welfare and cultural activities in the 1950s, and won the respect of many urbanised elite and working-class parents. He became particularly involved in the organising of boys' boxing clubs and the Pathfinder movement, for which "noble work" he was greatly praised by families for keeping children "off the streets", "healthily occupied" and "free from the demoralisation of the many evil vices" within Langa.[137] He was similarly instrumental in the formation and organisation of overarching controlling bodies, such as the Western Province African Musicians' Association and the Peninsula Choral and Vaudeville Artists' Association which, following Matshiqi's ideas for their aims and objects, sought to promote a mission school performance culture, Christian charity and an idealised form of "African" European culture.[138] In this way, the LPA proved to be relatively successful in achieving certain of its objectives, particularly in forcing the City Council to take primary responsibility for the recreational development of Langa. However, its demands were hardly far-reaching and once the CC reacted favourably to some of its calls, a close relationship based on common cultural aims quickly developed between the two organisations in the practical implementation of various scheduled projects.

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[136] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/14, minutes of the NAC, 17 September 1948; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/20, social work report, 31 March 1955 (annexure to NAC minutes); AWC 3/59 112, Rogers to Mrs. Overbeek, 24 March 1952.

[137] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/18, minutes of the NAC, 29 September 1952; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 131.

[138] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, notes on the Western Province African Musicians' Association and Peninsula Choral and Vaudeville Artists' Association; ibid., interview with Matshiqi, 25 October 1955.

In 1952 and 1954 respectively, two more strictly conservative organisations - the Peninsula African Socialite Association (PASA) and the Peninsula African Social Club (PASC) - were founded on a liberal and Christian basis, partly also in response to the growing social dislocation in Langa. The government-employed social worker, Matshiqi, was again influential in securing the formation of these associations, fundamentally as a means of providing healthful and educative activities for township residents, in the context of increasing crime.[139] However much these clubs purported to serve the interests of the community as a whole, they nevertheless functioned to attract petty bourgeois residents and some of the more moderate, urbanised, working-class family elements, and served primarily in the interests of this urbanised membership. In seeking to follow a disciplined and Christian code of conduct, both clubs came to set themselves apart as respectable organisations with merely a broad social welfare concern for the poor and neglected. The PASA was dominated by the Christian and white-orientated, *ooscuse-me* elite and administered according to its needs and concerns. This was applied with such rigid partiality that even a few of the more progressive *amatopi* social group and some of the more "responsible", urbanised, working-class elements of the *ooMac* and *ikhaba* social groups felt excluded, so that they soon seceded to form the PASC as their own exclusive organisation.[140] As part of their selective tendencies, both clubs applied a strict behavioural code, which ultimately limited its social range in membership. The PASA forbade any form of gambling, "the consumption of intoxicating liquor on the premises" and the admission of drunken persons.[141] The PASC made the same prohibitions and also placed restrictions on membership by requiring newcomers to

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[139]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, notes on social clubs; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 131.

[140]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 131.

[141]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 139.

exhibit "fit" and "proper" behaviour to the Executive Committee in order to be kept on the membership role.[142]

The Christian basis of the clubs was largely secured by Matshiqi, whose capable hand dominated the formulation of the respective constitutions. The inflated, quasi-legal and religious idiom and phraseology of the documents can be directly traced to him.[143] The constitution of the PASC particularly emphasised overtly Christian and apolitical objectives. The organisation at its very inception had the declared aim, for example, of meeting "for the purpose of the accepted principles of Christian fellowship". Activities were thus to be "conducted along the lines which are in harmony with the accepted principles of Christian practice".[144] As a necessary corollary, perceived to be inextricably connected to the promotion of a Christian-based organisation, it followed that any form of sectarian or political propaganda was to be debarred.[145] This strict constitution set the cautiously assimilationist tone for the character of the clubs in many ways. In the case of the PASC, it served to connect a number of the more responsible, urbanised working-class elements with mission cultural values and activities, amongst whom, stemming from the *ooMac* and *ikhaba* social groups, there was a tendency at times to deride Christianity and to engage in "wild" behaviour.[146] Because of their urbanised and petty bourgeois orientation, the clubs nevertheless alienated many local migrant unskilled and semi-skilled workers, who had increasingly strong political and even militant, convictions. Therefore, in their inward

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[142]Wilson Papers; BC 880, A1, box 2, Peninsula African Social Club notes.

[143]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, notes on social clubs.

[144]AWC 3/50 123, Acting Secretary of PASC to Rogers, 20 July 1956.

[145]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, Peninsula African Social Club notes.

[146]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 24, 27.

organisation, nature and activities, the clubs in fact ostracised many of the very individuals they hoped to reform. Thus, both organisations functioned in an isolationist and inward-centred fashion by seeking, fundamentally, to build strong family, cultural and class ties amongst the petty bourgeois and more urbanised, working-class residents. They aimed to achieve this by providing facilities for family games such as cards, draughts, chess, darts, ring board, tenniquoits, as well as free lessons in dancing, African music and boxing. Formal social evenings and dignified debates were also held as a means of inculcating wholesome western standards upon the urban, educated youth.[147]

As far as the clubs' welfare activities were pursued, this outward mission was carried out in a generally unenthusiastic manner. Only on special occasions did the organisations engage in charity work by delivering gifts to the poor and elderly. At such times, concerts would be held in liaison with the Municipal Native Administration in order to raise funds for such charitable activities.[148] Although advocated in a generally paternalistic fashion, the pursuit of a community centre was one area of special concern to the welfare work of both clubs. As with the views of the LPA, the clubs argued that the erection of such a complex was critical in solving the still growing problems of petty theft and juvenile delinquency, and in reforming the "unhealthy" migrant culture. In their opinion, a centre that could provide eisteddfods, cinemas, concerts, dances, indoor and outdoor games, physical development, arts and crafts, music and self-help clubs, lectures, discussions, debates and a general library service, offered the conclusive resolution to existing social disorders. Unlike the LPA, both the PASA and PASC accepted the CC's excuse for the absence of

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147AWC 3/50 123, Acting Secretary of PASC to Rogers, 20 July 1956; ibid., constitution of PASC; Botto "Some Aspects of the Leisure Occupations", p. 115; Kondlo, "The Culture and Religion of the People of Langa", p. 45.

148See, for example, Cape Times, 25 December 1957.

municipal funds for the project in the 1950s, and rather set about fostering contacts with a range of privileged black groups and white liberals in an effort to unite elitist and urbanised forces in a combined fund-raising venture for the centre. By the mid-1950s, the two clubs had aligned with a host of organisations in Langa which included the Western Province African Musicians' Association, the Peninsula and Vaudeville Artists' Association, the Ministers' Association, the Western Province Students' Association, the Langa Traders' Association, the African Nurses' Association, the Western Province Bantu Rugby Union, the Western Province Casino Union and the Western Province African Football Association, in the common purpose of collecting community centre funds.[149] In addition, the clubs also co-operated with the recently-constituted and predominantly white Cape Peninsula Bantu Community Centre Association (CPBCCA - later the Langa Community Centre Fund-Raising Association), which was composed mainly of prominent Cape liberals intent on the construction of an institutionalised community complex that would encourage the "best social habits", "educative entertainment", "wholesome pastimes", "mutual improvement" and "the spirit of brotherhood".[150] Relations with other white liberal-inspired associations such as the Fellowship of Cultural Understanding (Focus) - a club designed to cater for and encourage moderate blacks in close association with the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) - were also developed for the advancement of the community centre building fund.[151]

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[149]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 131; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, PASC notes; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/20, social work report, 31 March 1955, p. 562 (annexure to NAC minutes); AWC 3/6 125, fund-raising document, 4 January 1957.

[150]AWC 3/38 47, Cape Peninsula Bantu Community Centre Association document, 18 May 1955; ibid., constitution of the Langa Community Centre Fund-Raising Association; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/20, social work report, 31 March 1955 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[151]Cape Times, 16 September 1954; Botto, "Some Aspects of the Leisure Occupations", p. 119. Focus was commended by Matshiqi for organising the candle-light services and holding some of the best concerts in Langa in the 1950s. See 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/20, social work report, 31 March 1955 (annexure to NAC minutes).

Certainly, by the late 1940s, a clear distinction emerged between those petty bourgeois-orientated organisations more progressively aligned and those more distinctly conservative and overtly Christian in orientation. In some ways, the more progressive voluntary associations, like the LPA, proved to be more assertive and open to left-wing and populist ideas. Yet, in other ways, as for the more conservative groupings, the encouragement of Christian gradualist notions, social integration and African-white liberal liaisons, remained the underlying motivation of more progressive voluntary associations. Such forces shaped the future hope and direction of these movements, even in the face of the harsh local entrenchment of NP segregationist policies by the early 1950s. Despite being influenced to a degree by the increasingly radical and populist political tendencies in the township, even the more progressive organisations thus remained primarily moulded within the cultural ideals and methods of elitist African Christian nationalism. In other words, both progressive and conservative associations continued to view themselves as the vanguard of peace, stability and cultural programmes in Langa. Nevertheless, in a local context which favoured the growth of militancy as political responses intensified in the mid-to-late 1950s, these cultural movements became increasingly isolated in their moderate approach to the growing socio-economic and political tensions in the township.

2.5 The decline of mission education and Christian petty bourgeois culture

It has been made clear that already by the mid-1940s, mission education and Christian petty bourgeois cultural institutions were being challenged to some degree both by mainly progressive elite forces from within the Langa educational and cultural network, and by more radical political forces and a traditionally-orientated, "red" migrant working culture from without. As mission

ideals continued to shape African education and culture into the early 1950s, the cultural antagonism of these diverse forces grew in momentum. In the context of the authoritarian implementation of apartheid regional policy which served to radicalise the township political environment, the ambiguous character and moderate goals of mission education and "sober" recreation came under growing scrutiny, provoking the intensifying opposition of a range of petty bourgeois, working-class and Africanist elements. These forces of resistance, in turn, served to undermine broadly the previous strength of African Christian nationalist culture in Langa. At the same time, with the NP embarking on a policy of state secularisation in African education and organised entertainment, mission influence in local African schooling and, to a lesser extent, in cultural activities, was effectively curtailed by the mid-1950s.

So far as Christian-based public celebration committees, memorial organisations and elite clubs were affected, the more conservative cultural groupings, in particular experienced decline by undergoing forms of social closure in efforts to distance themselves from the increasingly progressive, non-collaborationist and anti-Christian liberal political climate engendered largely by NEUM and more radical United Front supporters during the 1950s. As in the case of the churches, these defensive actions had the effect of marginalisation. The demise of the Coronation celebrations and the Mendi Memorial in the 1950s, for example, similarly reflected these processes of social marginalisation and decline. In the context of the forceful denunciation and censure of the pro-British, liberal and Christian trusteeship character of such events from the NEUM and militant elements within the ANC, conservative committees were forced to reconsider the relevance and appropriateness of holding these annual occasions by the early 1950s. Thus, when the NEUM heightened its campaign to lead a boycott of the Coronation celebrations in 1953 to expose the futility of appeals to Britain and Christian principles, organisers were placed under extreme pressure to abandon the event. In these circumstances, a public meeting of the

more permanent urbanised and semi-urbanised residents from the married quarters and flats was held to gauge the opinion of the Langa community on the matter. In the light of the NEUM's condemnatory rhetoric of such hallowed Christian symbols as Great Britain as the defender of liberal, cultural, religious and civil human rights, residents bowed to this radical political pressure and for the first time voted against the staging of the Coronation Day celebrations in Langa. Significantly, the vote was considered lost by the old guard conservative elite as a result of the stiff opposition from semi-urbanised and so-called "young, irresponsible" single men, who sympathised with a militant voice of defiance against imperialistic Britain.[152] But it was also clear that certain petty bourgeois elements – both progressive and conservative – were becoming critical of Britain's lack of support for attending to the deepening plight of the African. Despite the display of public disapproval, the moderate old guard committee still stubbornly arranged for the commemoration to go ahead as planned.[153] Rather than yield to the localised shift of African political forces to the left, the organisers preferred to preserve the old mission cultural ideals and their positions of cultural authority by holding the celebrations. This resulted in their growing alienation as the event received decreasing popular support from 1953 to the point that the celebration had eventually to be disbanded by the late 1950s.

The ecclesiastical Mendi Memorial Committee was ostracised along similar lines in the 1950s. Again, the anti-British and anti-Christian liberal rhetoric of the NEUM in particular, served to undermine the popularity of the commemorative service. By the late 1940s, the Unity Movement had become especially scathing about the religious and ideological significance of the occasion, as espoused by the local clergy. It criticised the way in which the solemnity of the disaster had been evaded rather to commend a "gay and colourful" affair where the "virtues" of "Christianity, the

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[152] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/18, minutes of the NAC, 11 March 1953, p. 603.

[153] Cape Times, 22 May 1953.

Empire and Civilisation" were extolled. Instead of being a day of joy and pride, the NEUM argued that it should be remembered as a time of sorrow and mourning, even something to be recalled in shame and humiliation. For the Unity Movement, the significance of the Mendi disaster lay in its vain loss of life. Its intended moral was that Africans should not rush to arms in aid of the "herrenvolk" when the attainment of their own rights at home were not being championed from abroad.[154] Until such time that the meaning and character of the event was changed, it was argued that the memorial should be boycotted. As such political discourse gathered weight in Langa in the 1950s, the Mendi Memorial organisers were placed under pressure to re-orientate the service. Rather than transform the event and align themselves with radical rhetoric, the ecclesiastical leadership sought to maintain the mission and "school" nature of the occasion for similar reasons that the Coronation Committee sought to preserve Coronation Day. As a consequence, by 1956, the Mendi Memorial Service was attracting negligible popular African attendance. The commemorative day of that year was labelled a "fiasco" even by its ecclesiastical organisers, as they bemoaned the fact that political extremism had contributed towards motivating the stayaway.[155] They reported that some parents had even prevented their children from performing in the high school choir at the service, on the basis of what was described as a "semi-political manoeuvre".[156] Clearly, radical NEUM rhetoric was even penetrating progressive and conservative elitist circles by this time. Despite this setback, for the next five years, the Memorial management sought doggedly to restore the event to its former glory. Again, this had the effect of further isolating the Memorial Committee, who themselves became embroiled in a range of internal conflicts. Personal differences and petty squabbles emerged especially amongst the older

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[154] Torch, 8 March 1948.

[155] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Maya, 1956.

[156] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, interview with Mr. Pasha, 21 February 1956.

generation scholarship fund organisers, which led to delays and claims of corruption in the administration of the Memorial's education bursary. Subsequently, contributions to the scholarship grant declined to the point that, by 1961, the fund had become defunct. In that year, ironically at the same time of South Africa's breaking of ties with Britain by forming a Republic, the memorial service was held in Langa, with few in attendance, for the last time.[157]

African Christian national and cultural celebrations and their respective committees suffered similar patterns of marginalisation in the 1950s. The verbal attacks from the NEUM, the All African Convention and later the PAC were especially critical in this regard. Their critical remarks about the celebrations' revival of ethnic loyalties and connections with traditional chiefs found growing support in the 1950s, especially in the light of the developing critique of NP segregationist legislation such as the Bantu Authorities Act, that sought to fix ethnic cages around Africans and to ensure the collaborationist role of empowered rural chiefs. In this context, both the Mfengu and Moshesh Day celebrations, in particular, bore the brunt of local radical political criticism. Apart from accusations of the deferential trusteeship, state connections, "dubious" heritage and conservative religious homage of such events, the active disruption of welcoming receptions for chiefs by NEUM and All African Convention groupings, prior to the celebrations, further undermined the later holding of the memorials themselves.[158] Again, rather than be forced

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[157]AWC 3/44 97, Rogers to Bantu Affairs Commissioner, 17 March 1961; ibid., Ngubeni, Secretary of Mendi Memorial Service Fund General Committee to Manager of NAD, Cape Town, 16 May 1961; ibid., Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Johannesburg, to Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Western Cape, 13 April 1967.

[158]See, for example, the disruption of the welcoming reception for the Xhosa chief, Sandile, in 1955: Wilson notes, box 2, interview with Matshiqi, 15 November 1955. In this context of hostile opposition, it is interesting to note that even a number of conservative petty bourgeois Christians developed grave misgivings about chiefly arrivals. Some became acutely aware of the chiefs' conservative and reactionary political functions, and were apt to indulge in verbal attacks against chiefly political authority. Others, like Rev. Maya, resented their interventions in Langa in dualistic religious terms by arguing that, "My only Chief is Jesus". Maya also articulated a common economic criticism, which rejected the arrival of chiefs

into alignment with perceived "extremists", respective festival committees closed in on themselves to defend the existing ethos of the celebrations. In the subsequent struggle to maintain the movements' existence in the face of declining interest, both the Mfengu Memorial Association and the Moshesh Memorial Organisation (MMO) became plagued by internal disputes. Particularly during the years 1956 to 1963, the MMA was characterised by endless conflicts and splits amongst committee members which related to minor squabbles over the constitution and irregularities within the election proceedings, which led to intermittent cancellations of the celebratory occasion in the intervening period.[159] This, of itself, provided an indication of the personal jockeying for position and the tenacity with which the elite clung to their offices of declining prestige. The MMO, too, experienced a host of internal differences which led to the suspension of the Moshesh Day celebrations between 1953 and 1957. This included even stand-up fights and bloodshed on occasions, which corresponded to some of the physical confrontations in the local churches at the time. In this case, the conflict was mainly between conservative elite and migrant "school" Sotho, who contended amongst themselves for control over and preservation of the movement in the face of growing marginalisation. After a prolonged struggle, eventually in 1957 an alignment of forces saw the expulsion of the migrant Sotho. These, in turn, now disaffected, turned their energies away from Langa to establish their own memorial organisation in Nyanga.[160] These internal cleavages led to the further weakening and decline of the Moshesh Day celebrations by the latter part of the 1950s.

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for the reason that "they bleed the people of their savings" in their efforts to raise funds for rural projects and charities in the Reserves. Despite such forthright objections, the conservative educated elite found it impossible to prevent the entry of chiefs into the township and preferred to remain silent on the matter. Thus, although increasingly embarrassed by chiefly visits, they continued to organise the receptions. Some, though, went to the extreme of taking holidays in the country to avoid the formal receptions, which they themselves had arranged prior to their departure. See Wilson notes, box 2, p. 362; ibid., interview with Matshiqi, 15 November 1955; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 141.

[159]AWC 3/25 228, Rogers to Mkiva, 25 August 1959; ibid., Rogers to Njokweni, 5 April 1963.

[160]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, notes on Moshesh Celebrations; AWC 3/76 230, D.M. Gabontloeloe,

To a lesser extent, the Ntsikana Day celebrations were also challenged by Unity Movement supporters from the mid-1950s. They criticised the passive evolutionism and Christian liberalism inherent within the Langa memorial of Ntsikana, so that a growing perception developed amongst some residents that the folk tradition of Ntsikana was naïve. Even a few of the moderate Christian elite began to argue that "better things more fitting to the present day could be done".[161] By 1959, these criticisms had intensified with the emergence of militant elements in the local PAC branch, who generated a groundswell of local support for the anti-Christian and militant nineteenth-century prophet, Nxele, in opposition to the peaceable Christian, Ntsikana. In this context of growing political antagonism and pressure, attendances at the Ntsikana Day celebrations steadily fell away towards 1960. In the later 1950s public support was already minimal, forcing even organisers to describe the festival as a "flop".[162] Again, the NMO responded to the political challenges by seeking to preserve the "school" and "church" atmosphere of the event. In this way, by continuing to cater primarily for the interests of the Christian elite, the NMO further isolated itself from traditionalist migrants and radical political activists. Such rigid conservatism further encouraged the PAC's military offshoot, Poqo, to heighten its militant campaign in Langa, basing it on apocalyptic African religious heroes such as Nxele during the early 1960s.[163] In turn, in a highly-charged political environment, this shift in the nature of black nationalist ideology and struggle to new radical symbols of religious, political and cultural freedom, powerfully undermined local symbolic commitments to the non-violent Ntsikana, so that by the early 1960s,

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Head Secretary, to Rogers, 6 March 1953; ibid., letter to Mr. H. Ponsegrouw, Manager of Native Affairs, Nyanga, 31 January 1957.

[161]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, Ntsikana Day notes.

[162]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, notes, 3 April 1956, p. 521.

[163]Lodge, "Insurrectionism in South Africa", p. 151; Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, p. 203; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, p. 242.

the NMO had been effectively sidelined. The organisation even failed to collect sufficient funds in 1964, forcing it to withdraw its high school scholarship.[164]

Amongst the main voluntary associations established in the early 1950s, the PASA and PASC were already experiencing signs of serious decline by the end of the decade. In response to the challenges from, and the intensification of, local cultural and political resistance, both clubs underwent a distinct process of social closure as they sought increasingly to serve and protect only the *ooscuse-me* concerns, and the urbanised interests of the *amatopi* and more moderate *ooMac* of the older generation respectively. This attempt at self-preservation not only served to marginalise these clubs, but even functioned to alienate older conservative petty bourgeois and responsible, urbanised working-class elements from the younger *ooscuse-me*, *oomatopana* and more moderate section of the *ikhaba* age-sets. As a counter to the inaction, internal wrangling and inwardness of the social clubs, a number of dissatisfied young teachers disassociated themselves from the PASA and PASC to form the Langa African Cultural and Social Association (LACSA) in 1961.[165] The new organisation declared that social progress had been brought to a standstill by the PASA and PASC, which were described as simply "rest[ing] on their laurels" and "bus[ying] themselves by slinging mud at each other's organisations."[166] Yet, like the clubs from which it had separated, the LACSA was based on a similar set of middle-class Christian values and ideals. In time, as with its predecessors, it would come to function in the limited interests of its own youthful age groups alone. These divisions certainly limited the possibilities for a broader

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164AWC 3/49 229, untitled document, 27 April 1964.

165Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 131; Argus, 25 February 1961.

166Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 3, Langa African Social and Cultural Association notes; Cape Times, 17 January 1961.

membership and were critical to the processes of fragmentation and isolation from which such cultural associations suffered in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Other newly-formed, Christian-based and liberal multiracial cultural groups also struggled to entrench themselves in the township during the 1950s, due both to the local political antagonism to their purported white trusteeship and paternalism, and to the increasingly restrictive nature and enforced application of petty apartheid regulations in Langa. Organisations such as the CPBCCA, Focus and Toc H were severely hampered in their attempts to promote multiracial and inter-cultural co-operation for these reasons. On one hand, similar to the NEUM and Africanist disruption of political meetings which gave a platform to white liberals in Langa during the 1950s,[167] these voluntary organisations also suffered adverse publicity. Such open hostility and aggression stunted their development and growth. On the other hand, segregationist legislation worked against the very aims of co-operation and multiracialism central to the functioning of the organisations. For example, in its efforts to erect a community centre, the work of the CPBCCA was frustrated when government authorities refused to register the Association as a lawful welfare organisation in the mid-1950s on the basis of it having a joint black and white committee. Consequently, the Association was forced to disband and instead form two separate organisations – one black and one white – to function independently of one another, before making further separate applications for registration. This fundamentally limited the degree of success of the community centre fund-raising movement.[168] By 1960, a start to the construction of the community complex had still not been made, owing to a mishandling of funds and complex disputes over the rightful administration and division of finances between the two newly-

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[167] See ch. 3 (3.3) for further discussion.

[168] AWC 3/38 47, Secretary of Native Affairs to Registrar of Welfare Organisations, 1 September 1955.

constituted, government-enforced and racially-segregated Langa Community Centre Fund-Raising Associations.[169] Township entrance requirements and meeting restrictions further encumbered the development of mutual cultural links between white Cape liberals and the black petty bourgeoisie in Langa, so that by the late 1950s these co-operative and multiracial relations had greatly diminished.[170] This served to highlight the impotence of gradualism and inter-racial and cultural collaboration in their inability to transcend the intensification of the colour bar in Langa.

By the late 1950s, then, for a range of reasons, African Christian-based and elitist cultural organisations were in disarray and under severe pressure from a variety of socio-political forces. In these circumstances, Matshiqi as the government-employed social worker, noted in 1955 that even amongst many members of the educated and Christian elite, there was a growing reluctance to become involved in the promotion of existing cultural and social activities in Langa. He ascribed this inaction to the environment of fierce political opposition, as well as to disillusionment with the "anti-social behaviour" - the "malice" and "envy" - of the existing office-bearers as they jockeyed to maintain their positions of cultural prestige.[171] As one of the leading proponents of mission cultural ideals, Matshiqi himself became thoroughly disenchanted. After bearing the brunt of disparaging remarks, having himself been labelled a "quisling" by NEUM and Soya supporters for his close government association, municipal social work and services to private bodies such as the Pathfinders, he eventually resigned his position and departed from Langa in the late 1950s.[172] Under similar adverse circumstances, other eminent cultural figures at

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[169] AWC 3/6 125, letter to Matshiqi, 20 November 1956; ibid., Worral to Rogers, 13 February 1969.

[170] AWC 3/59 112, social welfare document, undated.

[171] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 1, interview with Matshiqi, 16 August 1955, p. 28; Cape Times, 12 August 1955.

[172] Wilson Papers, BC 880 A1, box 2, interview with Matshiqi, 8 August 1955; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 131.

this time, such as Pasha, Lediga and I.D. Mkize, left Langa and the Cape for the highveld, also deeply disillusioned.[173] The departure of such notable Christian and liberal cultural advocates contributed further to the weakening grip of African Christian cultural nationalism by the late 1950s.

Closely related to the series of internal problems and external political challenges faced by the conservative voluntary associations was the extensive development of an independent working-class subculture in Langa, particularly in the 1950s. This offered another source of underlying competition to the previous strength of township mission culture. In the context of the hardening Coloured Labour Preference Policy which introduced thousands of "bachelor" migrants forcibly into Langa, the Christian character of the township was severely undermined from around the mid-1950s as the inflow of mainly uneducated men followed an essentially non-western and traditional mode of society and cultural life. This alternative and distinctive form of working-class culture, made conspicuous by the growing number of unskilled domestic, commercial and industrial workers arriving in Langa, became increasingly formative in the 1950s, and paid little respect to the ideals of Christian morality, respectability and social order.

While such forms of leisure and cultural activity had been in existence since the inception of Langa, it was in the 1950s that these forces began to challenge and transform the overwhelmingly conservative urban character of the local community. With the increased number of uneducated migrant workers now residing in newly-built barracks and zones, "home-boy" social groups grew in popularity and expanded their distinctive set of traditional leisure activities. This social network was based on ethnic, regional and geographical affiliations, and was fundamentally rural and

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[173] Cape Times, 12 March 1960; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 131.

inward-centred in orientation. As a result, relations with the Langa elite and a respectable, modernising township culture were largely avoided. Apart from providing new "bachelor" arrivals with a sense of customary social cohesion, "home-boy" groups also created an antithetical form of township association separate from direct government and petty bourgeois cultural influence.[174] In similar fashion, *umgalelo* savings societies provided a degree of cultural separateness and independence from the accepted forms of elite conduct and in particular enjoyed widespread migrant support by the mid-to-late 1950s. These social groups hosted parties, which sought to deal concretely with the daily economic needs of working-class "bachelors". Amongst their adherents they were far more popular than the churches, because they offered traditional and "real sort of living".[175] Shebeens and *dibas* also functioned as a distinct set of communal centres which provided outlets for rurally-orientated recreation. A growing number of such informal party venues emerged in the 1950s, where "wild" drinking, "heathen" dancing, prostitution, gambling and the smoking of dagga was not exactly frowned upon by promoters and proprietors.[176]

Deeply conscious of the growing cultural threat of this independent working-class trend to their own respectable status in the 1950s, more conservative cultural groups combined with the township authorities for a concerted effort to declare such customary-orientated activities as "undesirable", "illegitimate" and even, in some cases, "illegal" and "criminal". The "unhealthy" influence of the barrack men's leisure culture, for example, was deplored by elite cultural associations for bringing about the idleness and corruption of semi-educated, residential youths in Langa, who increasingly refused to work, preferring rather to drink and gamble in the presence of

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[174]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, ch. 3.

[175]Molapo, "Identity, Popular Culture and Politics in Langa", pp. 16-18.

[176]Botto, "Some Aspects of the Leisure Occupations", p. 3.

"bachelor" migrants.[177] As before, but now in a more vocal fashion, elite groups condemned the evils of "heathen" dances and the licentiousness of the barracks' single quarters. Resolutions were urged to ban "sexually-explicit" frolicking, and girls of cultured urbanised families were urged to refrain from frequenting the barracks.[178] In particular, conservative social organisations held the "rowdy", "wild" and "hooligan" culture of the single men as responsible for the growing violence in Langa from the mid-1950s onwards. For example, they blamed the series of disturbances in 1956 which arose in resistance to liquor searches and police raids on the flats, on the "reprehensible" leisure behaviour of "hooligan" elements. As such, these associations gave their full support to the police action, arguing that working-class indecencies should be dealt with severely as a means of underlining the illegitimacy of "undesirable" forms of leisure.[179]

Such responses again served to undermine the influence of conservative associations by stirring up the opposition. Rather than helping to suppress "criminal" barrack and zonal recreational life, their hostility strengthened the independent resolve of the developing working-class subculture, which continued to flourish. Accordingly, moderate petty bourgeois cultural responses contributed to the growing moral cleavage and class differentiation in Langa which was founded on opposing moralities, traditions and patterns of behaviour. It could even be argued that this conservatism actually encouraged the growing connections between an independent proletarian subculture and the revival of militant Africanism. For, by increasingly seeking to root out the independent working-class subculture, the elite responses were further driving "bachelor" migrant working elements into radical Africanist camps, whose message naturally conformed closely to

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[177] Cape Times, 4 December 1956.

[178] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/16, minutes of the NAC, p. 698.

[179] AWC 3/23 201, minutes of meeting with Rogers and the police, 5 December 1956; Torch, 15 January 1957.

the inherently African rural orientation of migrant culture. This became most evident in the rising support of "homeboy" cultural groups of migrant workers from "bachelor" quarters in the late 1950s and early 1960s for the Africanist policies of the local PAC and later Poqo.[180] The extent of the growing tensions and antagonisms between the two divided cultural networks would be reflected acutely in the March uprising of 1960 when extremist "homeboy" groups, in radical support of the PAC's anti-pass campaign, targeted moderate cultural institutions supported by the African Christian elite - the recreation hall, the civic hall and the library (in addition to certain churches and government administration buildings) - to be set on fire as an expression of their blanket rejection of "westernised" culture.[181]

At the same time that Christian petty bourgeois cultural institutions underwent decline, mission influence in education was also severely restricted in Langa in the 1950s. This related primarily to the localised implementation of NP educational policy which ultimately led to the "nationalisation" of the primary mission schools in the township as the Nationalist Government set about the secularisation of African education according to its broader segregationist agenda. This growing Nationalist Government encroachment over public and private education which effectively signalled the virtual end of the mission school era in South Africa, has been attributed to a range of causative factors. Fundamentally, it has been linked to the NP's broader segregationist attempts to restructure the social order, in the face of the acute general crisis that existed in the South African political economy towards the end of the 1940s. Thus, it has been argued that the Nationalist intervention in black education was part and parcel of the general apartheid ideology aimed at producing an ethnically separated and docile people, providing a

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[180]Lodge, "Insurrectionism in South Africa", p. 143; Cape Times, 15 December 1962 and 6 December 1962.

[181]Argus, 22 March 1960; Cape Times, 8 June 1960; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 102, 103.

controlled and cheap supply of labour, and shaping a subordinate workforce that would know its preordained place in society. This was in response to threatening processes of massive urbanisation and proletarianisation in the context of a decaying pre-capitalist social order, growing social unrest and heightened black resistance.[182]

With the subsequent appropriation of the primary mission schools by the mid-1950s, whereby mission authorities were virtually forced to transfer their institutions to the Native Education Department (later the Bantu Education Department), two decades of mission education in Langa was effectively brought to an end. In this way, a cornerstone of the local mission enterprise and power base of the Social Gospel was abruptly removed, giving a heavy blow to the dissemination of mission ideals in the township. As the new local Bantu community schools were led in the direction of preparing pupils for a destiny permanently separate from whites, the incongruity in the promises of the gradualist mission programme became even more apparent, laying it open to serious criticism by the end of the 1950s. Nevertheless, so far as educational matters were concerned, it was not perhaps so much the loss of the schools themselves which fundamentally weakened the broader mission influence. For, as some observers anticipated, it could have been expected that churches might even have gained sympathy and support for their cause in response to their schools being seized. But, in the context of mission schools already facing decline and challenges from a growing body of progressive elements, as it happened it was more the manner in which local mission authorities handled the transfer of the schools and the way they allowed

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[182]For further discussion, see for example: P. Christie and C. Collins, "Bantu Education: Apartheid Ideology and Labour Reproduction", in P. Kallaway (ed.), Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans, (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1984); R. Levin, "Black Education, Class Struggle and the Dynamics of Change in South Africa since 1946", Africa Perspective, 17 (1980); Mohamed, "Langa High School", pp. 88-101.

themselves to be co-opted into the new system which provoked opposition and served to undermine the grip of mission ideology.

When faced with the prospect of their institutions being taken over to form part of the envisaged system of mass Bantu community schooling in the early 1950s, the ambivalent responses of the ecclesiastical managers of the primary schools in Langa created a stir amongst the broad base of rising political opposition to Bantu Education (BE). On the one hand, with the obvious exception of Rev. Scheffler of the DRC, the ecclesiastical school managers in theory opposed BE and understood its intention to educate Africans for an inferior place in the socio-economic order. In line with broader statements of opposition to the BE system from their larger synods and denominational church bodies, they considered BE to be an anathema, and often provided lengthy tirades against the evils of the system.[183] Local Anglican clergy, in particular, decried the government's intentions of "muzzling African aspirations", as they bitterly dispelled the Department's "myth" that BE sought to foster African progress. The ministers also feared that parochialism would creep into the schools in the form of Afrikaans being proposed as a compulsory subject at high school, and they denounced the idea of Xhosa being introduced as the exclusive language medium in the higher standards of primary schools, which they viewed as a means of thwarting the African drive for higher education.[184] In general terms, these outspoken opinions of local mission authorities corresponded with and contributed to wide-ranging protests from Langa parent bodies, teacher associations and political groups, which similarly considered BE to be integral to the whole developing system of rigid segregation, along with its repressive mechanisms of influx control, labour bureaux and Reserves. With such common views it might

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[183]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Maya, 1956.

[184]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, interviews with Anglican clergy, 1955, p. 388.

have been expected that the mission authorities would have aligned themselves with local forces of political opposition to BE. However, in practice, the moderate methods, practical acquiescence and insular stance through which the ecclesiastical school managers confronted the dilemma of the future standing of their schools, failed to connect with the more engaging protest of groups such as the NEUM, CATA and the ANC. This prevented an effective unitary alliance of BE resistance from developing in Cape Town.

Bound by the conservative assumptions of mission ideology, and already threatened by progressive elements in their criticism of mission schools, ecclesiastical managers preferred to tackle the question of BE alone and apart from parent, teacher and political organisations in Langa. Acting in accordance with white-dominated broader synod approaches and resolutions, they advanced their own individual formal deputations in protest against particular mechanisms of the BE proposals, rather than to promote active common opposition to prevent their implementation, as was advocated by groups like the NEUM, CATA and the ANC. As ministers of religion in charge of mission schools, unlike professional educationalists, they tended to argue against the seizure of their schools more on the basis of the loss to the churches themselves of an important area of evangelical outreach, than on the basic racist assumptions of BE. In this way, they undoubtedly failed to grasp some of the key educational issues by not having a coherently developed philosophy of education. As at a national level, this effectively limited the mission response in Langa. As a result, the mission school managers made little headway with the local education authorities and were simply placed under government pressure to meet deadlines to reach decisions regarding the future of African schooling in Langa.

Essentially, mission school authorities were faced with three options as regards the future of their schools under the Bantu Education Act (BEA). Firstly, they could retain their schools as private

institutions but without any government aid whatsoever any longer. Secondly, they could maintain their schools with a 75 per cent state subsidy for the salaries of teachers, which would be reduced by 25 per cent every year, until the subsidy would cease altogether after four years. In effect, other than securing ownership rights, management responsibility and freedom to prescribe their own religious instruction syllabus, such schools would differ very little from the local government community schools. For the main curriculum would still be set by BE prescription and the institutions would be forced to co-operate closely with BE officials. The third option involved releasing the schools to the control of the local authorities, with the promise of reasonable compensation. In the context of a drastic curtailment of state financial aid, mission authorities were forced into the unenviable position where it was felt impossible to maintain the mission school system. With the mission primary schools experiencing problems of finance, increased intakes and of maintaining already over-strained resources, the ecclesiastical managers became convinced of the unviability of continued mission education in Langa. Apart from the remaining avenue of transferring their schools to the Education Department, there was the additional option of closing them as a method of protest. Despite their objections to BE, the majority of Langa clergy, however, came to support the former course of action as the only available and unavoidable option for the future of African education. They argued in line with their moderate principles by maintaining that what few concessions were left to Africans in the educational realm should be utilised and not be discarded. An inferior education was considered to be better than none, and the lesser of two evils should be chosen by transferring the schools and not closing them. Having reached this tricky decision mainly independent of the local community, a number of local clergy even began to promote BE publicly in terms of some of its perceived advantages, particularly the proposed expansion of African schooling towards the introduction of compulsory

education.[185] Some ministers also argued in favour of the extended BE system in that it would provide greater control over the Langa youth.[186]

Ultimately, it was left to the wider church bodies to make final decisions on the future of mission schools, partly on the basis of such regionalist views. With much of the discussion centred within the confines of broader white-dominated religious bodies themselves with little wider social and political consultation, most denominations at the national and regional levels came to concur with local mission authorities by recognising that it was financially impossible to retain their schools. As with the conclusions of the local clergy in Langa, by following concessionary mission principles, most broader synod resolutions prescribed the transferral of the schools as a lesser evil than having them closed.[187] The Roman Catholic Church alone made a decree to retain its schools, but again this decision was based more on religious than political grounds. Significantly, the Catholic response was based on the religious conviction that Catholics ought to receive Catholic education, rather than squarely on BE as being part of apartheid legislation designed to maintain the subordination of Africans.[188] With the resolutions of the majority of larger denominational bodies thus overlapping with the views of the local mission authorities, there were

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[185]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Tshabangu, 1955; p. 87; ibid., box 2, interview with Mr. Matshiqi, 8 August 1955, p. 18.

[186]AWC 3/10 239, Bantu Education Act document, 22 May 1957.

[187]See, for example, the response of the Methodist Church in: M. Rundle, "Accommodation or Confrontation? Some Responses to the Eiselen Commission Report and the Bantu Education Act with Special Reference to the Methodist Church of South Africa", (University of Cape Town, M.Ed. thesis, 1991). See also E. Behardien, "The Bantu Education Act of 1953: Origin and Response", (University of Cape Town, B.A. (Hons) thesis, 1981), ch. 5. Behardien remarks on p.49 that with the exception of the Johannesburg Diocese of the Church of the Province of South Africa "controlled by Bishop A. Reeves and a few other schools which decided to close rather than co-operate in any way, all schools were either leased or sold to the government".

[188]For a detailed analysis of the Roman Catholic Church's response, see: D. Bixby, "The Roman Catholic Church and Apartheid in Education", (University of Cape Town, B.A.(Hons) thesis, 1977).

few local ecclesiastical objections to the wider church decisions. Mission managers rather prepared for what they saw as the inevitable transfer of their schools to the control of the Department of BE. Consequently, by the end of 1956, all the mission schools in Langa, except for the Roman Catholic School, St. Louis Primary, had been officially taken over by the government department in what was a polite and co-operative process between the mission authorities and government officials.[189]

From the outset, the failure of mission managers, local clergy and broader church bodies to work alongside parent, teacher and political organisations in offering co-ordinated resistance to BE and in seeking alternative solutions for their schools in Langa, provoked growing criticism of the church position. In this way, cautious ecclesiastical responses served to alienate local churches from the wider opposition and to legitimise their more radical rhetoric, so that even some conservative parents were pushed into the more politicised camps. In Langa, most of the initial active opposition to BE was organised by the CATA in the early 1950s. Initially a more moderate organisation of Christian teachers, in due course the rise of a more progressive teachers' element came to expel the moderates and to take over the organisation by 1948, partly as a result of growing opposition to mission education. Breaking with its previous stance, the new leadership at this time affiliated the CATA to the AAC, the NEUM and the more radical coloured teachers'

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[189]AWC 3/1 3, annual reports, 12 March 1957. In accordance with the decisions of national synod and the separatist religious convictions of the Catholic Church, St. Louis Primary was retained in terms of the second prescribed option whereby the ecclesiastical management maintained ownership of the school, yet, by receiving a decreasing state subsidy for teachers' salaries, the school became intimately involved in the new BE school system. In effect, other than securing ownership rights, management responsibilities and freedom to prescribe their own religious instruction syllabus, the school would differ very little from the local government schools. Its main curriculum was set forth by the Department of Bantu Education and it, allegedly, co-operated closely with BE officials. Certainly the local Catholic clergy, in retaining their school in Langa, had no thought of defying the government and were known to be in agreement with BE strategies on a number of points, such as the opposing of rapid concessions to Africans. See Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interviews with Catholic Fathers, 1955; ibid., box 5, Mafeje papers on Langa schools.

organisation, the TLSA.[190] In relation to its scathing denunciation of BE, the CATA, in alignment with the NEUM, singled out local churches and the ecclesiastical managers of schools in Langa for criticism for not seeking the counsel of parents and remaining aloof from communal discourse on BE issues.[191] The CATA was particularly incensed at the churches' refusal to allow the organisation to hold protest meetings in their school buildings.[192] Consequently, both the CATA and the NEUM came to caricature the local churches as "the advanced guard of imperialism", in siding with the forces of oppression against the opposition in the fight against BE. As such, the local clergy were branded as "stooges" and "quislings", working to undermine the so-called "unshakeable opposition" to BE.[193] This widening polarisation between the more progressive and radical elements, and local church authorities, was made explicit at an anti-BE protest organised by the CATA in 1952 where, according to Rev. Maya, the "opposition" made plans to burn the churches. On this occasion, such action was narrowly avoided, but the tension between moderate mission authorities and radicals was reaching dangerous proportions over BE questions.[194] In addition to criticism of the local clergy, the CATA also condemned the moderate responses of the small and conciliatory Cape African Teachers' Union (CATU), as part of its more radical programme of action. The CATU had emerged as an organisation of conservative Christian teachers after their expulsion from the CATA in 1948. Under the leadership of the moderate headmaster of Langa High, I.D. Mkize, the CATU continued to believe in negotiation and sought to make its protest known through official channels. In a position typical of that of the

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[190]Mohamed, "Langa High School", pp. 31, 45.

[191]Torch, 10 November 1953, p. 3.

[192]The New Teachers' Vision, vol. 1, October-December 1955, p. 10.

[193]Torch, 10 November 1953, p. 3 and 28 December 1954, p. 5.

[194]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Maya, 1955; Cape Times, 16 December 1952.

local clergy, the CATU leadership would temper attacks on BE with a strongly "realistic" stance. At the end of the day, they would also argue that "half a loaf is better than no bread" and reluctantly accept the introduction of BE.[195] With the ecclesiastical approach, the CATU's guarded stance, too, came under fiery censure from the CATA, which accused the organisation of being "reactionary collaborators" who intended to divide the "unified" resistance against BE.[196]

This fierce criticism of the attitudes of staunch Christian teachers, the local clergy and mission school managers, together with the more radical programme of action against BE, found growing support amongst both more conservative and progressive school parents. Even the LPA, made up of many Christian parents, came to identify with the radical rhetoric of the CATA and the NEUM in opposition to BE and the ecclesiastical approach. In this way, ironically, as a largely agnostic, "Marxist" political grouping, the NEUM came to wield a fair amount of influence even amongst the urbanised, married and largely Christian sector of the Langa community on the BE issue. In this context, the non-collaborationist rhetoric of the NEUM served to undermine conciliatory mission ideals. Indeed, with the ANC only assuming a more prominent role in opposition to BE in Langa once it became clear that the BEA system was to be implemented as law, both the NEUM and CATA were able to command an influential following in its absence. Once the ANC became more active around the mid-1950s, it, too, set itself in opposition to the conforming responses of

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[195] M.J. Cameron, "The Introduction of Bantu Education and the Question of Resistance: Co-operation, Non-Collaboration or Defiance? The Struggle for African Schooling with Special Reference to Cape Town, 1945-60", (University of Cape Town, M.Ed. thesis, 1986), pp. 211, 212, 214; Mohamed, "Langa High School", p. 106.

[196] Torch, 7 April 1953 and 18 August 1953, pp. 6, 8; Mohamed, "Langa High School", p. 106. Notice that the CATU even supported participation in the Van Riebeeck Tercentenary celebrations of 1952 in contrast to the boycott actions of the CATA and the NEUM. For his role in advocating support for the event, Mkize was labelled a "baasboy".

the mission and *yokwenyani* churches.[197] By the time church authorities came to hand over their schools, a range of community organisations were thus deeply aggrieved about the compliance of the local churches. Furthermore, with the subsequent eventual transfer of their schools, churches effectively broke the back of local resistance to BE, which brought even greater resentment. Radicals connected to the NEUM would later charge local church authorities with being guilty of conforming to BE and being partially responsible for introducing its "poison". As a consequence, many ecclesiastical leaders and their more conservative supporters were becoming more and more socially and politically differentiated from the growing progressive and radical opposition. Local commentators were clear about observing the drastic decline in the hold of the churches on public sentiment during this period of struggle against BE.[198]

In all of this, one compelling reason for the growing ill-feeling against churches and the decline of mission ideals related to ecclesiastical attitudes to the introduction and administration of school boards and school committees, central to the implementation of BE. Once it had been decided to transfer their schools, local mission clergy worked closely with the education authorities in the transition from mission schooling to BE in Langa. Rather than abandon the educational sphere entirely, they became intricately connected to the establishment of the BE system by providing the early leadership of the regional School Board and local school committees. Effectively, school boards and school committees were designed to oversee the implementation of the BE system at

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[197]D.Z. Makhubela, "An Analysis of Bantu Education in the Western Cape", (University of Cape Town, B.Soc.Sci.(Hons) thesis, 1978), pp. 14, 23. In addition to Makhubela's thesis, for the general response from parent, teacher and political organisations in Cape Town, see: Mohamed, "Langa High School", pp. 101-106; Cameron, "The Introduction of Bantu Education", pp. 169-215; J. Hyslop, "Aspects of the Failure of Bantu Education as a Hegemonic Strategy: School Boards, School Committees and Educational Politics 1955-1976", (History Workshop paper, University of the Witwatersrand, 9-14 February 1987), pp. 5-8.

[198]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Scheffler, 1955.

the local level. They were to take control of the mission schools, cater for the practical administration of everyday school affairs and lead the local schools in the direction of BE according to the official directives of the Bantu Education Department (BED). In line with the spirit and principles of BE, school boards and school committees were constituted ostensibly, to give Africans a share in the administration of their own educational system. But, at the same time, they were designed as a strictly government-controlled and subordinate vehicle by seeking to co-opt only moderate Africans who were not "politically engaged", and by enforcing their rigid adherence to the realisation of BE proposals at local level, with little say in larger matters of curriculum formation and the allocation of government resources.[199] Despite the crucial BE connections, it was perhaps not surprising that local ministers and a number of staunch church members offered their services on School Board and school committees, given the high value placed on education as one of the few remaining social tools and their opportunity to remain at the head of African education.

As a first step towards the implementation of the BEA in Langa, it was announced that as from 1 April 1955 there would be one Bantu School Board introduced into the Cape Peninsula, which would be responsible for all the schools in Langa.[200] Aware of the ambitions and moderate mission ideals of the large proportion of Langa clergy and their more conservative adherents, the NAD targeted these individuals as possible representatives of the Board. Lists of likely nominees were drawn up, with Mr. B. Pasha and the Reverends Lediga, Mbizela, Zondeki, Teki, Tshabangu

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[199]For further details concerning the restrictions on the powers and constitution of the school boards and committees, see: Makhubela, "An Analysis of Bantu Education in the Western Cape", pp. 51, 52, 55, 56, 60, 61, 72, 74, 77, 85, 87.

[200]AWC 3/10 239, letter from J.S. Ormond, Inspector of schools, to the Manager of Non-European Affairs, Cape Town municipality, 31 March 1955.

and Qobo eventually being suggested as the main nominations for the Board.[201] These nominees duly accepted representation on the Board, thus giving momentum to the accomplishment of BE objectives in Langa. In May 1955, the Board was inducted with Rev. Lediga as its first Chairman.

It has been argued, on shaky evidential grounds, that ministers of religion in the western Cape were coerced to stand for the School Board on the basis of departmental threats to close schools in Langa altogether.[202] A closer analysis of ecclesiastical motivations, however, indicates compelling reasons why they personally chose to be represented. In line with the reasons for the transferral of their schools, the local clergy tended to view their representation as an "unavoidable duty" in the defence of an education, however bad, as one of the few concessions still available to Africans. Within the context of few educational options, they therefore justified their involvement on the basis that even a poor schooling system needed to be upheld. Volunteers argued that it was better to stand for and to maintain "a sick baby rather than put it out to die".[203] In accordance with co-operative and reformist mission tendencies, they even believed that they could transform the system from within over time. The following quote by Rev. Tshabangu was typical of the conservative assumptions which framed the clergy's collaboration with the Board:

> If, when the new syllabi are examined in detail by the African members of the board, they are found wanting, then will be the time to protest and, should the protests be ignored, to dissociate oneself with the scheme on those specific grounds. Refusal to co-operate now, on the other hand, is merely giving the authorities a trump card; for they can say: "we offered them a chance to run their own show, and they didn't want to." This would look very bad overseas . . . Mere verbal criticism alone is not without its effect, and can secure positive

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[201] AWC 3/10 239, BEA document, 14 January 1955; Cape Times, 1 September 1955.

[202] Makhubela, "An Analysis of Bantu Education in the Western Cape", p.24. Notice that Makhubela does not ground these assertions with any specific evidence.

[203] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, interview with Mr. Pasha, 23 January 1956, p.302; ibid., interview with Mr. Matshiqi, 8 August 1955, p.18; ibid., interview with Rev. Tshabangu, 1955, p.87; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 103.

> advantages where silence can secure none. Anyway, the Africans in this country are powerless, and it would be folly to attempt active opposition.[204]

Arguably, with the prominence of such ecclesiastical attitudes, compulsion was not necessary to co-opt the local clergy onto the Board. At the inaugural Board meeting, Rev. Lediga was even described as offering overt co-operation in the implementation of BE. In his opening address, he was quoted as saying that although the BE architect and Secretary for Native Affairs, W.M. Eiselen, had been designated as the most hated man in the country, it would be his Board's task to lessen such hatred for the man. As part of his broader acceptance of BE, he made use of religious symbolism to promise that "we shall bear his cross and see to it that our own people understand. I will remove that hatred and suspicion".[205] Although the Christian social worker, Matshiqi, argued that the content of Lediga's address had been falsely reported and had neglected his simultaneous misgivings about BE, the reasons he provided for Lediga agreeing to be Chairman of the Board again indicate the volunteer factor. He suggested that Lediga's involvement emanated from his concern that "if the African children were to be slaughtered, he wanted to be there as witness of what actually happened".[206] In addition to these moderate and personal factors, it can be argued that since many ministers had been politically ostracised by this point, they had nothing to lose by making themselves available for the School Board. Instead, faced with the opportunity to reassert their declining educational and cultural status, they believed, inappropriately as it turned out, that they had something to gain.[207]

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[204]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Tshabangu, 1955.

[205]Torch, 31 May 1955. See also Cape Times, 24 May 1955.

[206]For the alternate viewpoint, see: Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Mr. Matshiqi, 1955, p. 27.

[207]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje papers on Langa schools.

From the outset, Lediga and his Board were viewed with disdain and considered as "sell-outs" to the white administration by the large majority of residents in Langa which included the *ooMac*, *amagoduka*, *ikhaba* and *iibari* social groups.[208] Most parents and teachers – including those from the progressive and even some from the more conservative Christian petty bourgeoisie – rejected the system of both school boards and committees out of hand. Following the important voice of the CATA, the NEUM, AAC, ANC, LPA and LVA, they viewed the bodies as being integral to a broader segregationist educational policy aimed at separating black from white education, with the view to keeping Africans forever subservient and inferior, and geared as a political tool towards transferring nominal, paper responsibility to Africans without losing effective governmental control. In this regard, taking the early lead mainly from the CATA, most parents had resolved to boycott school boards and committees by not making themselves available for election and nomination. This large support for a more radical response was made evident when hundreds of parents at respective meetings held under the auspices of more progressive groups such as the CATA, the LVA, LPA and Western Province Parents' Association, repeatedly voted in overwhelming favour of the boycott, compared to poorly-attended CATU gatherings which promoted participation in the system.[209] Thus, when the local clergy broke the back of the boycott to stand for and bring the Cape Peninsula Bantu School Board into being, they bore the brunt of considerable criticism, even from some staunchly conservative Christian parents. The CATA was particularly scathing in their representation of the local ministers as "jackals quick to rush in on the corpse of African education to see what scraps and offal they could get for themselves".[210] Rev. Lediga, in particular, came under personal attack by being described as a "belly crawling

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[208]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje papers on Langa schools; Torch, 31 May 1955.

[209]Torch, 18 August 1953, p. 6, 10 November 1953, p. 3, 22 March 1955, p. 1, 30 August 1955, p. 8, 15 April 1958, p. 8 and 17 November 1959, p. 6; Cape Times, 1 September 1955.

[210]The New Teachers' Vision, vol. 1, April-June 1955, p. 13.

collaborationist" by NEUM antagonists.[211] The fact that the ministers had been nominated by government officials and had not been elected by parents as the system envisaged, was a further provocation to angry residents.

The largely ecclesiastical and moderate Board suffered more hostility when in one of its first tasks, it was expected to convene individual school meetings on behalf of the NAD in order to persuade parents in Langa to elect school committees. To this end, picnics were strategically organised for the Langa community by Ngo, the Bantu School Board Secretary, primarily with a view to inducing parents to support the meetings.[212] Respective Board members presided over the meetings, but faced vehement opposition as parents in decisive fashion refused to elect school committees in the context of a wider boycott of school committees in the western Cape. For example, Rev. Tshabangu, who together with the Native Commissioner, Parsons, presided over the Methodist School meeting in September 1955, was branded by those congregated as a "political betrayer" of his children and people. At the close of the meeting, after 90 parents had voted against electing a school committee with 24 abstaining and not one in support, the Reverend Chairman called upon the people to rise and to close with a prayer of benediction. In an uncommon occurrence, the majority of parents – many of them Christian – responded by exclaiming that they did not wish to hear him pray and promptly exited the building.[213] Similarly, after a meeting at Langa High, where only 2 out of 19 parents had voted in favour of a school committee, Rev. Lediga, who had brought the evening to a close, was reported as literally having to run for home to escape the angry crowd that had gathered outside the school.[214]

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[211] Torch, 31 May 1955.

[212] Torch, 20 March 1956, p. 3.

[213] Torch, 6 September 1955, pp. 1, 8.

[214] Torch, 20 March 1956, p. 3. For other instances of the parent boycott of school committees in the mid-

Despite subsequent school meetings called by the Board and the NAD between 1955 and 1959 where efforts were made to promote the benefits of BE and to persuade parents to elect committees, a strong majority of parents in Langa remained committed in their resolve to boycott the elections.[215] The situation at the Dutch Reformed School was the only exception, where a committee was elected in August 1955, which itself appears to have been established on suspicious grounds, with accusations of election tampering.[216] In this case, it appears that Rev. Scheffler, the Dutch Reformed minister, with the assistance of DRC resources, was able to reassure many conservative and Christian Sotho parents about the importance of school committees. In particular, Scheffler had the active support of the local white DRC Commission for Education and Youth, which campaigned in Langa for the establishment of BE and African involvement in school committees. This Commission particularly targeted Sotho Christian parents as the main support base of the local DRC, and urged them to reject the "anti-educational" attitudes of political groups such as the ANC, which advocated the withdrawal of students from schools as part of its boycott programme. Rather, the Commission promoted BE "as having the best Bantu interests at heart" and gave it the blessing from the "holy church fathers", who were deemed to have positively commended the new educational system.[217] It would seem that such religious sanctioning proved effective in aiding the establishment of the school committee, much

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1950s, see Torch, 22 March 1955, p. 1 and 29 March 1955, p. 3; Cape Times, 26 August 1955.

[215]See, for example, Torch, 15 April 1958, p. 1 and 26 August 1958, p. 5.

[216]Torch, 6 September 1955, pp. 1, 8; Hyslop, "Aspects of the Failure of Bantu Education", p. 5.

[217]SSK, S.5/2A/37, Commission for Education and Youth letter, circle of Langa, 4-6 April 1955.

to the pleasure of Scheffler, who considered it "a matter of congratulation" that his church alone had agreed to elect a school committee. Few others in the wider Langa community, however, responded to the formation of the Dutch Reformed School Committee in these terms. Instead, they labelled Scheffler and the committee members as "traitors" to the people.[218]

When it became clear that the large majority of parents were adamant about their rejection of Bantu school committees, both the Board and the NAD turned to more devious methods to ensure the election of committees. The Board, for example, directed headmasters to place pressure on parents by corresponding personally with them to ascertain whether or not they supported the committees. The Board also organised meetings specifically for teachers, where it insisted that it was the duty of the teaching staff to persuade parents to vote. As a consequence of the Board's demands, there was a suggestion that some conservative teachers even threatened pupils with punishment should their parents fail to vote, and intimidated boycotting parents by threatening that they would not be allowed to send their children to school.[219] In addition, the NAD drew up lists and targeted potential individuals, in collusion with the Board, with a view to putting pressure on them to stand for the committees.[220] These efforts at compulsion, however, failed in their objectives and served only to heighten the feelings of bitterness against Board members and the NAD. By 1959, in spite of the growing pressures on headmasters, teachers and parents, school committees continued not to be elected.[221] Eventually, in collusion with the now BED, the Board would be forced to overcome this impasse by simply appointing the school

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[218] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Scheffler, 1955.

[219] Torch, 30 August 1955, p. 8.

[220] Torch, 29 March 1955, p. 3; AWC 3/10 239, BEA document, 14 January 1955.

[221] Cameron, "The Introduction of Bantu Education", p.197.

committees without any elected parent members as had been envisaged by the BEA. Despite the great opposition to school committees, it was again conservative local ministers and church supporters of the *ooscuse-me* social group which were willing to be represented. With this group of volunteers, a number of school committees were thus formed in 1960 and 1961. These included the Langa High School Committee, the Tembani (formerly the Methodist School) School Committee, the Elukhanyisweni (formerly the St. Cyprian's School) School Committee and the Mokone (formerly the AME School) School Committee to which the Revs. Ndzotyana, Thethiwe and Mankayi; the Revs. Qobo, Teka, Makamane and Louw; the Rev. Mbizela, and the Revs. Maya and Tshabangu were nominated respectively.[222]

The effectiveness of the boycott of school committees in Langa was largely due to the organisational efforts of the CATA in alignment with the NEUM. Although the ANC played a role, its campaign rather focused on the national withdrawal of students from the schools, which was not actively supported in the township (especially given that the CATA and the NEUM, as the early organisational opposition to BE in Langa, argued against such action), so that it was not as influential as elsewhere in the country. By contrast, the CATA and the NEUM were able to command strong support from the majority of parents and teachers in Langa in their campaign against Bantu school committees. As leftist organisations, these groupings were able to radicalise the responses of urbanised parents – both Christian and non-Christian alike – as they came to assume their "non-collaborationist" terminology and to reject the "Christian liberal" approach of the largely ecclesiastical Board in their general opposition to Bantu school committees and

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[222]AWC 3/10 239, BEA documents, 18 January 1961, 4 December 1961, 5 December 1961 and 7 December 1961; AWC 3/60 69, newspaper cuttings, 17 August 1961 and 22 August 1961. Rev. Cekido of the AME Church was one of the few nominated, who refused to be appointed. See AWC 3/10 239, Rogers to Native Commissioner, 20 November 1958.

boards.[223] This was evident when the CATA and the NEUM made inroads into the largely Christian-based LPA to effect an alliance with the Association. As a consequence, the LPA's statements against BE and school committees became suffused by radical Unity Movement terminology. The following resolution made at an LPA meeting in 1958 provides an example:

> 1. We affirm that (i) the aim of Bantu Education is to intensify the oppression of the Non-European people by subjecting their children to a system of indoctrination; (ii) participation in school committees and school boards under the Bantu Education Act would be collaborating with the Native Affairs Department in the oppression of the people.
> 2. We resolve to continue and intensify the boycott of school committees and boards under the Bantu Education Act.
> 3. We brand as a Quisling and a traitor to his people anyone who participates in any way in the election of these school boards and committees.
> 4. We undertake to co-operate with all those organisations struggling for a democratic system of education for all children.[224]

The use of such radical discourse certainly served to alienate the largely ecclesiastical Board, even to the point where more conservative Christian parents were appropriating forms of self-expression antagonistic to conciliatory mission ideals.

As the Langa Board set about its administrative tasks with growing insensitivity from the mid-1950s, it further provoked the resentment of many Christian and non-Christian CATA-aligned teachers. The fact that many Board members turned out to be administratively inefficient and ill-equipped for their duties was a major point of contention. Given that most Board members were empowered without the necessary professional qualifications to administer teachers who, in most cases, were much better qualified than those in authority over them, brought another factor into the growing disapproval of the school board system. In addition, as with a number of the earlier mission managers, some of the Board members were inclined to misuse their new positions of

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[223]Mohamed, "Langa High School", pp. 103, 104; Makhubela, "An Analysis of Bantu Education in the Western Cape", p. 23; Cameron, "The Introduction of Bantu Education", pp. 177-188, 197-199, 202-204.

[224]Torch, 15 April 1958, p. 8.

authority and to rule strictly over CATA-aligned teachers in particular, something which came to be deeply resented. In defence of the Board, Rev. Lediga suggested in 1958 that teachers were in fact treated so sympathetically that even the local authorities had accused his committee of leniency. However, it was clear that the Peninsula Board could be quite imperious in the execution of its functions – for example, in its eagerness to follow governmental directives to enforce strict services of contract and to deal severely with so-called "unco-operative" teachers.[225]

The high-handed actions towards politically active CATA teachers in Langa, which resulted in the dismissal and transferral of certain staff from their posts, aroused widespread administrative and teacher dissatisfaction with the conservative Board. The fact that the expulsions and transferrals tended to be based more on the Board's suspicion and fear of "radical" CATA teachers than on particular educational shortcomings, seems especially to have provoked fellow teaching colleagues, as well as many parents. In Langa, the dismissals included Mr. Siwisa from Langa High, who was an executive CATA member and Mr. J. Kwebulana from the Tembani Bantu Community school, who, too, was a prominent member of the CATA and had chaired many of the organisation's meetings. Those transferred to other schools in the country included the staunch CATA supporters, Mr. Mqingwana and Miss Ngumebela, also from the Tembani School.[226] The expulsion of Kwebulana provided a case in point in exposing the controlling concerns of the largely ecclesiastical Board.

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[225] Torch, 1 April 1958, p. 3.

[226] Makhubela, "An Analysis of Bantu Education in the Western Cape", p. 19; Cameron, "The Introduction of Bantu Education", p. 199; Argus, 13 July 1960.

Kwebulana was well known in Langa as an excellent teacher and firm opponent of the "bantuisation" of the African people. At CATA meetings he was quick to expose the role of the clergy as "collaborators" on the School Board, and generally proved "a thorn in the flesh" for the Board. He became especially critical of the conservative Board Secretary, Ngo, whom he accused of devious tactics and dishonest dealings. When a vague allegation against Kwebulana surfaced with regard to sexual misbehaviour with a schoolgirl, the Board was swift to seize the opportunity to terminate Kwebulana's teaching career in Langa and so to remove an important CATA voice of dissent. But, with the backing of the CATA, Kwebulana resisted the allegation and found support from the parents of the girl, who wrote to the Board stating that there was no truth in the claim. The Board, however, continued to pursue the matter by attempting to force Kwebulana into signing an admission of guilt statement. This resulted in a scuffle with Ngo when Kwebulana refused to sign the document. The Board subsequently filed a lawsuit against Kwebulana on the charge of assaulting Ngo. At this point, it would appear that the campaign for Kwebulana's dismissal had gone beyond fears of CATA "radicals" to involve a personal vendetta on the part of Ngo, who had made previous threats that he would get Kwebulana the sack in response to Kwebulana's earlier attacks directed at him. Kwebulana later appeared in court, having by this time been expelled from his post, and was found not guilty and discharged. In his closing statement, the magistrate deplored the action of the Board in bringing an innocent man to court and strongly condemned it for pursuing the matter, once the letter had been received which absolved Kwebulana of the accusation. At the same time, the magistrate advised Kwebulana to seek legal opinion on his dismissal.[227] Once again, in a case which was closely followed in Langa, the Board's actions came under growing scrutiny to the point that it was greatly discredited. It is

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[227]For a review of the case of Kwebulana, see: Cameron, "The Introduction of Bantu Education", pp. 199-200; Torch, 4 July 1956, p. 3 and 12 June 1956, p. 1. It appears that Kwebulana was not reinstated. Although the CATA had won a test case towards the reinstatement of their teachers, this victory was not followed through in a number of situations. See Cameron, "The Introduction of Bantu Education", p. 200.

interesting to note that Ngo, himself, later appeared in court on seventeen counts of theft, fraud and forgery, some of these allegations which related to his period of employment as the Board Secretary.[228]

The Board was also at the centre of great controversy when, as the body responsible for the enforcement of government directives, it was forced to carry out the reclassification of the primary schools in Langa in 1959 and 1960. In this case, the question of regrading was revealing in uncovering the tensions and uncertainty created by the implementation of BE, even amongst the most conservative Christians represented on the appointed school committees and School Board. Essentially, the decisions taken to regrade the primary schools in Langa were made by the BED with little consultation with the Peninsula Bantu School Board, school committees or parents. The Department determined that the old Dutch Reformed School (renamed the Moshoeshoe Bantu Community School), significantly, would remain a full primary school (Sub A to Std. 6), the old Anglican School would become a higher primary school (Std. 3 to Std. 6) – having previously been a full primary school – and the old Methodist School was to be reclassified from a full primary school to a lower primary school (Sub A to Std. 2).[229] The BED argued that the policy to reorganise the schools was based on questions of accommodation and not outright attempts to degrade the schools. For example, the larger schools such as the old Methodist one were considered more suitable to accommodate the lower classes as they were attended in greater numbers than the higher classes. For these reasons, ostensibly, the Department promoted the system of reclassification as a professional education policy designed to meet the best interests of

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[228] AWC 3/10 239, newspaper article, undated.

[229] Cape Times, 13 February 1960.

the community.[230] As the conduit of BED decisions, the Board was left to institute the proposed system in Langa.

Initially, in a typically uncritical, conciliatory mission fashion, the Board seemed convinced of the departmental strategy and promoted the regrading of Langa schools on the basis of the accommodation question as it set about implementing the reclassifications.[231] However, in its efforts to realise the BED's decisions, it was confronted by a large majority of parents and teachers who contested the new gradings as being part of the mass schooling system planning whereby an inferior education would be offered. At a broadly-aligned meeting in November 1959 attended by affiliates of the LVA, NEUM, CATA, ANC and LPA, a large body of parents and teachers denounced the demotion of full primary schools to higher and lower primary schools as a reprehensible attempt to destroy African education and reduce Africans to the status of mental and physical slaves.[232] In particular, there was strong parent opposition to the reclassification of Tembani from a full primary to a lower primary school. Even the unfavoured and conservative Tembani School Committee, which itself was appointed by the BED and not an elected body with parent support, joined in the protest. Under growing pressure, the Board was eventually obliged to submit to public appeals and, in an unprecedented act of disobedience of the BED's directives, took it upon itself to reconstitute Tembani as a full primary school.[233] In this way, for the first time, the Board had shown itself not to be totally aloof from popular opinion. The failure to comply with the Department's instructions, however, resulted in the unseating of the existing

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230AWC 3/60 69, report by J.L. Ormond, Inspector of Bantu Education, 25 July 1960.

231Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje papers on Langa schools.

232Torch, 17 November 1959, p. 6.

233Argus, 15 July 1960; AWC 3/60 69, report by Ormond, 25 July 1960.

Board and the appointment of another, which subsequently upheld the proposed reclassifications of the BED.[234] Significantly, although the Board had by this time suffered severe condemnation, a number of Langa ministers were still very willing to stand for it and to align themselves with the authorities. As a result, the new Board was dominated by a group of even more conservative ministers, which included the Revs. Lukuko, Mokhatla, Makhene, Thethiwe and Ndungane, who were identified by departmental authorities as persons who would toe the official line.[235]

The reversal in the status of Tembani by the new Board was met with major protest by parents and teachers, which lasted three months and caused the school to close for an entire term. Parents were infuriated that they, together with the conservative school committee, continued not to be consulted over the question of reclassification.[236] They were also perturbed about transferring their children to other schools, which were recognised to be of a poorer academic standard.[237] Furthermore, they complained about the costs of transferring their children in terms of providing new uniforms and protested against the loss of their investments in the school such as raising money for school band instruments, building improvements and recreational aids.[238] With the

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234 Argus, 22 August 1960 and 9 September 1960; AWC 3/60 69, report by Ormond, 25 July 1960.

235 AWC 3/10 239, BEA documents, 6 September 1955, 13 July 1960 and 18 January 1961.

236 Argus, 13 July 1960 and 15 July 1960; Cape Times, 14 July 1960.

237 Argus, 15 July 1960 and 22 July 1960; AWC 3/60 69, untitled document, 17 March 1961.

238 Argus, 22 July 1960. It would appear that some parents based their opposition mainly on moderate grounds. As a spokesman for the Methodist parent protest and a steward of the Methodist Church, Mr. S. Gcuze, for example, defended the parents' actions on the basis that the protest was an "orderly" one and not centred around "political considerations". It seems that a number of parents, as Methodist Church members and having been educated as Methodists, were proud of the former Methodist School's reputation, compared to some of the other former mission schools, and wanted their children to be educated in a school that, although now a Bantu community institution, still had Methodist roots in the township. In this regard, it would appear that their opposition to Tembani's reclassification was partly the consequence of long-standing, inter-school rivalries, which were connected to the previous system of denominational schooling. See Cape Times, 14 July 1960; Argus, 15 July 1960 and 22 July 1960.

backing of the CATA, the LPA, NEUM and the now banned ANC, parents lodged their objections in the third school term of 1960 by refusing to transfer their children in Standards 3, 4, 5 and 6 to the classified higher primary schools.[239] There is also a suggestion that they excluded lower primary pupils from other schools from entering Tembani.[240] In response, the new Board ordered the unrepresentative school committee to close the school and withdrew certain identified CATA "agitators" from the staff.[241] Indicative of the ambiguous responses of conservative Christians faced with growing dilemmas, the school committee complied with these directives, yet continued to campaign for full primary status for Tembani.[242] Stubbornly, however, the new Board remained deaf to calls from both parents and the local school committee, so that the school stayed closed for three months. With parents sticking resolutely to their protest for the entire term,[243] the Board eventually backed down to break the stalemate by opening the school in the fourth term with the promise that the BED and the School Board would later consult with parents. These meetings, however, never materialised, especially as the School Board continued to pay no heed to grievances, so that the protest eventually ran out of steam and disintegrated.[244] The protest was nevertheless significant in further undermining the legitimacy of the School Board, and in bringing about major schisms even amongst those conservative petty bourgeois

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239 Argus, 13 July 1960 and 14 July 1960.

240 Cape Times, 16 July 1960.

241 Argus, 14 July 1960.

242 Cape Times, 16 July 1960.

243 Cape Times, 14 July 1960; AWC 3/60 69, untitled document, 17 March 1961.

244 Argus, 5 October 1960 and 12 October 1960; AWC 3/60 69, untitled documents, 15 March 1961 and 7 June 1962. It is interesting to note the insensitivity of the Board, as at the time of the parents' protest on this issue, it attempted to hold an election for the four parent vacancies on the school committee. It is equally significant that the existing school committee, although supportive of the protest, was quick to comply with the request to hold an election. As usual, not a single parent would stand for the committee. See AWC 3/60 69, untitled documents, 15 March 1961, 17 March 1961 and 27 September 1962.

Christians co-opted into the system, so that even they were forced to question the ideological limitations and functions of their socio-religious commitments.[245]

In many ways, the strong presence and actions of ministers and some of their more staunch church supporters in the local school administration system were thus central to the feeling of intense disapproval that developed against the churches and their reformist mission ideology. Given that the BE schooling system, as it developed in Langa in the late 1950s, led to a marked decline in the state of African education in the township, this inevitably laid the local Christian-dominated educational bodies open to accusations of collaboration as the working arms of the BED. After only two years of BE in Langa, the relevant bodies were already being chastised by parents for introducing an inferior system, which they believed placed an emphasis on manual skills and led to teachers losing interest in their work.[246] The school committees and Board were criticised for being party to the establishment of a syllabus which stressed gardening and handwork, and which led to students, reportedly, roaming the Langa surrounds in search of cow dung to supply the school gardens with manure, to the detriment of sound academic instruction in the classroom. It is notable, too, that the bodies were challenged in their promotion of the Department's religious syllabus which was considered by mobilised parents to be a heavily overburdened subject (with its scope so wide "as to compare favourably with that of candidate preachers") and designed to produce docile pupils who would take their assigned place in the order of things.[247] In their connection with a mediocre and sub-standard system, the position of

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[245]See also the Moshoeshoe School Committee's annoyance with the delays in administrative procedures and lack of co-operation on the part of the Board: AWC 3/60 69, Sixaba to the Manager of Bantu Administration, 26 June 1962.

[246]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p.104.

[247]Torch, 15 April 1958, pp. 1, 8, 26 August 1958, p. 5 and 17 November 1959, p. 6.

the conservative Christian elite thus contributed towards the radicalisation of a gathering force of residents, who subsequently appropriated the more militant, "anti-Christian liberal" rhetoric of the non-collaborationist NEUM and CATA in particular, in their struggle against school boards and committees.[248]

Certainly, by 1960, conservative petty bourgeois attempts to create a distinct African Christian cultural and educational identity in Langa as a strategy for socio-political advancement had been seriously weakened. The promises of uplift that their cultural organisations advocated and their value on education as the route to self-improvement, advancement and civil rights was proving mistaken, particularly in the context of a broader segregationist South African social order whose future was being pushed in the opposite direction. However, despite having experienced intense local resistance, the conservatives experienced a mini-cultural revival in the 1960s. This occurred after the government repression of the Langa uprising and the unrest of the early 1960s, which created a social and cultural vacuum in the township which was conducive to conservative renewal. With radical groups effectively silenced, conservative petty bourgeois cultural associations re-emerged at the same time as the churches became more active in the community once more. New organisations such as the aforementioned Langa African Cultural and Social Association, and the Students' Educational and Cultural Association were formed in 1961, with the express purpose of restoring peace, order and stability to the township. These elite associations, like their forebears, continued to seek to achieve their goals through the promotion of a Christian ethos and Christian principles in combating the perceived evils of juvenile delinquency, "politicism" and the retrogression of moral standards.[249] Residents' committees also

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[248]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje papers on Langa schools.

[249]Cape Times, 17 January 1961; AWC 3/66 283, constitution of the Students' Educational and Cultural Association.

arose, primarily represented by the conservative and religious elite, with the goal of uplifting the social and cultural state of the depressed township by countering juvenile delinquency and political radicalism with a Christian spirit of co-operation and harmony.[250] In addition, efforts were made to revive African Christian cultural celebrations as a means of "normalising" tense living conditions in Langa. Subsequently, Moshesh Day and Mfengu Day were once again held and received substantial support from both conservative petty bourgeois and "school" migrant elements, so that as late as 1966 and 1973 respectively, the commemorations still attracted hundreds of adherents from around the Peninsula. Again, local clergy such as the Revs. Jafta, Ndungane, Mtimkulu, Manana and Xibenye were prominent in the organisation and proceedings of the celebrations.[251] In educational involvement, both members of the local clergy and the conservative Christian elite felt more comfortable once the repression of local radical African resistance had taken place, to volunteer as nominees for the School Board and school committees and so to assist in perpetuating the system of BE schooling in Langa. Their numbers on the relevant bodies increased dramatically to indicate their continued value of education as a basic social, political and economic tool and form of status. Amongst the many conservative church members represented, a number of mainly mission clergy remained prominent on the school committees into the late 1960s. These included the Revs. Thethiwe, Tshazibana and Tshabangu on the Tembani Committee, Revs. Mburwana and Nkowana on the Elukhanyisweni Committee and Rev. Matyumza on the Langa High Committee.[252]

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[250]AWC 3/37 177, untitled documents, 1966. Local ministers involved included the Revs. Thethiwe, Mngqilisa, Matyumza, Citashe, Tshazibana and Mankayi.

[251]AWC 3/76 230, programmes, 1963, 1965 and 1966; AWC 3/25 228, programmes, 1967, 1968 and 1973; AWC 3/49 229, untitled document, 27 April 1964; Argus, 16 May 1964.

[252]AWC 3/10 239, BEA documents, 15 February 1967 and 16 February 1967.

In this way, the moderate ideals of a national African Christian cultural and educational identity remained durable, especially in the mid-to-late 1960s, in a climate which favoured conservatism and co-operation with the authorities. Still, despite the re-emergence and partial recovery of conservative and elitist cultural forms, these organisations functioned with little broader popular legitimacy among the wide cross-section of residents in Langa. By the late 1950s, many people had already come to reject the contradictions and impotence inherent within African Christian cultural and educational ideology. Although silenced for the duration of the 1960s, their underlying shift towards more radical new Africanist symbols and paradigms that would form the basis of a quest for broader African unity, and cultural and educational freedom, would become apparent by the late 1970s.

CHAPTER THREE

Religion and Politics

3.1 Liberal postmillennialist Christianity, the Social Gospel and early political effects

In addition to the marked influence of mission ideology in the domains of organised religion, education and culture in Langa, the Social Gospel would also prove formative in shaping a variety of local political responses. Already by the end of the nineteenth century, liberal Christianity had been particularly influential in contributing towards the "great tradition" of Cape liberalism that shaped black socio-economic and political involvement in the Cape. Especially from the 1870s, educated black Christians were encouraged to participate in Cape electoral politics by white liberal "friends of the natives", such as Saul Solomon, W.P. Schreiner and J.X. Merriman, who had strong affiliations with the English-speaking churches and hoped to bring to fruition the civilising work begun by the colonial missions. In association with their white liberal promoters, such African Christians came to defend the limited franchise for blacks in the Cape on the basis of civilisation, Christianity, property rights and personal industry, and to celebrate British religion, education, language and culture as central to their advancement in civil society. By 1910, a relatively strong group of educated, socially-orientated African Christians had emerged in the Cape, who intuitively combined their political engagement with active Christian membership and leadership. Under the influence of figures such as John Tengo Jabavu, these African Social Christians formed part of a national elite. This operated within the gradualist assumptions of missionary political ideology towards the goals of common social integration and political absorption, even if at times it tended to be shaped by partially segregationist, paternalist and unequal relations as well. Appeals for African rights were made in the name of Christianity, human decency and democracy, as what was envisaged was the establishment of a common

Christian society.[1] Thus, by the 1920s, a strongly entrenched tradition of Christian liberalism powerfully motivated black socio-political responses in the western Cape. This would continue during the 1920s and early 1930s, as the African Christian elite provided black political leadership in Cape Town in the form of an influential moderate bloc that included a range of liberal, nationalist and civic organisations. Early black politics in Langa grew out of this broader context, being particularly informed in its early stages by social responses in Ndabeni, with which the new township was closely connected in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

From the inception of Langa, the local political leadership in continuity with the Ndabeni experience was dominated by the emergent Christian petty bourgeoisie, many of whom had been socially active in Ndabeni community politics. Most of this Christian elite had been educated at missionary institutions, and attended or led mainly mission and respectable churches, initially in Ndabeni and later Langa. So far as the community politics of Ndabeni in the first three decades of the twentieth century was concerned, mission clergy and prominent Christians had been especially influential in leading the struggle for local and national black rights. The Reverends Elijah Mdolomba, Patwell Matshikwe of the Presbyterian Church, William W. Olifan of the Church of Christ, Zaccheus R. Mahabane and later Abner Mtimkulu of the Methodist Church, and Savage and Bull of the Anglican Church, together with educated mission Christians such as Julius Malangabi, W.P. Mama and J.Z. Fuku, in particular had acted as key public spokesmen in addressing African grievances and advancing deputations to the Township Superintendent, the Native Affairs Department and the City Council. In alignment with white liberals with close mission connections in Cape Town, such as Sir Walter Stanford, Sir James Rose-Innes, Rev. H.

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[1]Chidester, Religions of South Africa, p. 87; Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel", p. 357; Mills, "Millennial Christianity, British Imperialism and African Nationalism", pp. 343, 344; S. Trapido, " 'The Friends of the Natives': Merchants, Peasants, and the Political and Ideological Structures of Liberalism in the Cape, 1854-1910", pp. 252-253 in Marks and Atmore (eds.), Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa, (London, Longman, 1980).

Booth Coventry, W.G. Bennie and W.G.A. Mears, these black Christians thus shaped the cautious and reformist responses which emerged within local community politics in Ndabeni. Apart from their involvement in corporate ecclesiastical appeals, individual social projects and court solicitation which emanated from their church work, they also became prominent, largely in an individual capacity, in the leadership of the local Native Welfare Society (the forerunner of the Cape Peninsula Joint Council of Europeans and Bantu), the Ndabeni Advisory Board (NAB), the Ndabeni Vigilance Association (NVA) and the local Cape Native National Congress branch (later the ANC). In close association, these organisations worked together as a pervasive, moderate and Christian liberal alliance, especially in the 1920s. These social links and commitments, strongly entrenched by the late 1920s, continued to frame the political base of the emerging Christian elite leadership in Langa, which included mainly mission and respectable clergy such as the Reverends S.J. Mvambo from the Methodist Church, Bull, Savage and A.M. Mbizela from the Anglican Church, F.J. Tladi from the AME Church, C.N. Citashe from the Ethiopian Church of South Africa and Ndibongo from the BPC, as well as notable *yokwenyani* Christians such as Garcia Nongauza, W. M'Hlom, W.P. Mama and Julius Malangabi.

Most of these politically active Christians in Ndabeni and later Langa continued to draw heavily from their mission experiences and the tradition of Cape liberalism in informing their political involvement in the 1920s and early 1930s. Social Gospel ideas in the form of conservative Anglican Christian socialism, and the cautious American philosophy linked to Booker T. Washington, as outlined in chapter one, were especially prominent in the efforts of both black Christians and their white patrons to reform government policy, improve race relations and facilitate dialogue.[2] Therefore, the emergent African nationalism at the Cape in the early twentieth

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[2]Notice that ministers, like Rev. Mvambo, represented on the Langa Advisory Board, even ensured that streets in Langa were named after Booker Washington and Jabavu, as well as after other Christian liberals

century remained strongly founded on Christian principles which, at the same time, meant that radicalism or communism was fiercely rejected. Motivated by this "religious" ideology of African nationalism in the 1920s, local clergy and black elite Christians thus provided an important reformist and dissenting political voice in Cape Town. Inevitably, however, this peaceable, humanitarian and Christian-based political response remained constrained by being enmeshed in the increasingly dehumanising racial, class and gender relations that were taking shape in an emerging industrial capitalism.

Most local mission clergy took an important lead in the formulation of political opinions from their experiences at broader synod conventions and the respective General Missionary Conferences (GMC), which they increasingly attended from the 1910s and 1920s. In particular, the synods of the English-speaking denominations and the meetings of the GMC became informative in addressing the social and political plight of Africans in South Africa from this time. These national and provincial bodies were already protesting against a range of discriminatory legislation and at general social living conditions by the 1930s. Basing their socio-political policies in the paternalist belief that the educated should represent the hardships of the uneducated "black masses" in their advancement towards civilisation, the various bodies had made a series of demands, in some cases reflecting conservative and segregationist concerns, in others, liberal and integrationist objectives. Most of the resolutions, however, remained general in nature, were divorced from direct church action and congregational involvement, and failed to mount a frontal critique of the developing South African political economy.[3] With these broader

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such as Bennie and Mears. See 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, LAB minutes, 20 April 1933 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[3]Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel", pp. 356, 359, 360; J.W. de Gruchy, The Church Struggle in South Africa, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids and Claremont, Eerdmans and Philip, 1986), p. 88; Cochrane, "Servants of Power".

representative bodies paternalistically leading the opposition and advancing deputations, smaller church groups were not encouraged or provided with the necessary contextual resources to develop a direct and corporate church voice of institutional dissent at the local level. In particular, black ministers were expected to subordinate their organised religious appeals to the lead of larger, white-dominated Christian groups. Thus, although strongly informed by the socio-political approach of Christian leaders at these conventions, local mission ministers in Ndabeni and Langa failed to organise their protests in terms of corporate church representations in the 1920s and 1930s. They preferred to allow prominent white clergy and established white Christian organisations to take the initiative. In such circumstances, few motions emanated directly from local, regional or national religious bodies which reflected concern for African living conditions and rights in the western Cape region. For the duration of the 1920s and 1930s, this remained the case, with ecclesiastical responses continuing to be paternalistic, white-dominated and generalised in orientation.

Only occasional statements were made by white Christian bodies on behalf of Africans in Cape Town, usually with little or no local consultation. These resolutions revealed the combination of liberal and reformist tendencies of the respective organisations. In one occurrence, for example, the Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church urged the NAC in 1924 to reject the proposed compulsory carrying of passes by Africans in the Peninsula. On liberal grounds, the Synod viewed the introduction of such regulations as "derogatory to the self-respect of the individual", "an unjust restraint on liberty" and "an incentive to police tyranny".[4] In another of its few localised appeals to the authorities in the 1920s, the Cape Presbytery in 1927 expressed concern to the NAC over the injustice of raising the cost of living in Langa with the proposed increase in rent and railway fares. While acknowledging the "high purpose" and "generous plans" of the CC for

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[4] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 18 February 1924, p. 281.

the housing of Africans in Langa – thereby not decrying the forced removals to and segregation of Langa *per se* – the Cape Presbytery nevertheless still felt compelled to lodge objections to the increases.[5] Similarly, in a rare appearance in 1932, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) despatched a deputation to the NAC in response to the introduction of draft "togt" labour registration regulations. Rather than dispute the entire registration regulations, the WCTU was simply concerned about Clause 5 which proposed restrictions on the entry of female Africans into the proclaimed area of Cape Town and included the provision of carrying work certificates, which should be produced on demand. The Women's Union was willing to accept the clause if necessary, but in that case argued for preventing Africans leaving their home district in the first place, to save them the inconvenience of being repatriated on their arrival in the western Cape.[6]

As far as local corporate religious responses were concerned, such statements from the churches in Ndabeni and Langa were even more rare. One of the few practical concerns which did emerge centred around the question of liquor. In this regard, local churches – both mission and independent – followed the lead of white-dominated religious organisations in campaigning for the introduction of temperance and the prohibition of alcohol in the proposed new Langa township. In alignment with the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa, the Cape Town Diocesan Synod of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa and the South African Temperance Alliance (SATA), a large body of Ndabeni mission and independent church ministers in 1924 rallied in support of the CC's decision to establish Langa with a total ban on liquor. They supported the CC's paternalistic justification that the interests and welfare of the residents would be promoted in the foreplanning of a "dry" township. To this end, they concurred that the

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[5] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 21 November 1927.

[6] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 14 March 1932.

experience of the existing permit system in Ndabeni was open to abuse and "detrimental to the morale of the native".[7] Together with larger Christian organisations, local ministers viewed the Council's proposals as a moral and Christian victory which, reportedly, would quell their "racist fears" that "the native, once he has acquired the alcohol habit, is physically much less capable of moderation than a European."[8] Apart from these few instances, local direct representations were virtually non-existent.

Rather than function as a force of institutional dissent, local ministers instead conceived of their socio-political role more in personal and individual terms. Drawing from the narrow interests, practical concerns and concrete knowledge of their experiences of mission Christianity, they tended to function more "like social workers than social analysts" (to use Richard Elphick's phrase)[9] by undertaking a range of pragmatic experiments and individual projects. To this end, local church authorities committed themselves to a variety of court cases in defence of individual African rights on issues of employment, housing, labour, rents and passes in the 1920s and early 1930s. The Reverends Charles S. Papu, Olifan, Savage, Bull and Citashe in particular, tended to witness regularly on behalf of individual Africans.[10] On occasions, ministers would use the stand as a platform to decry particular injustices. For example, in September 1930, the Revs. Papu and Olifan supported Mr. Bale, accused for non-payment of rent, on the basis that rentals were

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[7]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 29 July 194, p. 83; ibid., 9 February 1925, p. 207.

[8]CA 3/CT 4/1/5/1262, memorandum to the Mayor of Cape Town from Archbishop of Cape Town, Charles Savage et al, July 1924.

[9]Elphick, "Mission Christianity and Interwar Liberalism", pp. 73, 74. This case study of Langa thus confirms some of the broader findings and conclusions of Elphick in his much wider analysis of mission Christianity in South Africa during the inter-war years.

[10]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 32, May 1929, p. 4; BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 29 November 1932, p. 44, 63; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/4, minutes of the NAC, 8 September 1930, p. 10; Molteno Papers, BC

unreasonably high in Langa, especially in relation to the low wages paid to African workers.[11] On an individual basis, local clergy also provided pragmatic leadership in a range of church-supported welfare, civic and liberal ventures. In this regard, they proved to be highly influential in promoting the moderate principles of mission political ideology to shape the relatively conservative character of community politics in the 1920s and 1930s. Therefore, despite their negligible role in direct mission responses, local ministers still had an influential effect through practically-orientated initiatives.

Most especially, they played an important role in the mission-dominated Cape Peninsula Welfare Society (CPWS) and encouraged the local Christian elite to engage in this welfare organisation as part of their social duty. The CPWS was formed in 1922 as part of the broader liberal movement in South Africa bringing together a loose alliance of missionaries, African petty bourgeois Christians and white paternalists. These welfare organisations sought to enhance black-white relations on the basis of discussions, aimed to improve race relations and sent deputations to local and central authorities. Based on the principles of Christian trusteeship and paternalism, and also strongly influenced by the philosophy of Washington and Aggrey, the societies reflected the "cautious vantage point of mission Christianity" (to quote Richard Elphick once again).[12] Most members – black and white alike – considered it a necessity for whites to help advance Africans to produce an elite class of moderate petty bourgeois blacks who, in turn, would function as cultural mediators to subordinate fellow black workers. In this context, the local Welfare Society

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579, Citashe's legal correspondence with Molteno, A24.717, 16 March 1945; ibid., documents A24.1100 - A24.1227, 6 September 1947.

[11] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/4, minutes of the NAC, 8 September 1930, p. 10.

[12] Elphick, "Mission Christianity and Interwar Liberalism", p. 73.

emerged, ostensibly, "to provide a channel for Christian involvement", with Cannon Lavis and Father Savage represented on its essentially white-dominated inaugural Executive Committee.[13]

By 1923, the Welfare Society was a relatively strong body, comprising twenty whites and twenty Africans on its executive of prominent community leaders. The views of Ndabeni mission ministers – especially Savage, Mtimkulu and Bull – were particularly vital in shaping early CPWS concerns. Their mission ideas of partial segregation, in concurrence with the perception of some white paternalist theorists in the Cape, were especially formative in the Society's first priority, which was to ease the growing pressures of Africans in the city slums and to counter the poor living conditions in Ndabeni. Although undoubtedly anxious to better African living conditions in Cape Town, these local ministers – guided by their ambitions to be agents of social regeneration – argued for variants of partial segregation as a means of providing Africans with space for improved development, even though they opposed certain other segregationist measures which they deemed to be unjust. To this end, both Kinkead-Weekes and Legassick are in some ways correct to argue that liberal religious leaders acted both as "agents of social control" as well as "precursors of the apartheid state".[14]

Savage, Lavis and Bull were vocal in their support for the developing segregationist tendencies of central and local government by calling for the upgrading of the location system, the removal of squatter camps and the control of "native influx". As early as 1921, in line with the Cape Peninsula Church Council (CPCC), they had argued for improved locations with "decent"

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[13]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", pp. 123-125, 155-157.

[14]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", pp. 123-125, 155-157, 253; M. Legassick, "Legislation, Ideology and Economy in Post 1948 South Africa", in Journal of Southern African Studies, VI (1), 1974, cited in P. Rich, "The Dilemmas of South African Liberalism: White Liberals, Racial

accommodation, in response to the perceived health hazards in Ndabeni and the city slums.[15] For similar reasons that they supported residential segregation, they also called for certain forms of influx control. With a focus on local practicalities and welfare concerns, and without reference to the increasingly impoverished conditions in the Reserves, they were emphatic over the need for African repatriation, by citing the negative effects of the "native invasion" in the early 1920s. Savage, for example, wanted unemployed "natives" sent home, considering that, in his words, "they are swamping us of badly paid unskilled labour". In qualified support of the developing labour preference policy, he was of the opinion that coloureds ought to have first claim on employment possibilities, as Cape Town was their only home compared to the situation of the African.[16] Canon Lavis, similarly, wanted the influx of Africans controlled on the basis that they were, in his view, the main reason for increased criminal activity in Cape Town in the 1920s.[17] Father Savage even took matters of African influx into his own hands at this time by making repeated appeals through the Anglican mouthpiece, Ixilongo, to clergy and rural readers to dissuade Africans from entering Cape Town in search of employment. His warnings were particularly directed at the entry of illiterate men, for whom he believed there were few prospects, especially during the period of Depression in the early 1930s when unemployment in the Cape was rife.[18]

Ideology and the Politics of Social Control in the Period of South African Industrialisation, 1887 to 1943", (University of Warwick, Ph.D. thesis, 1980), p. 9.

[15]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 124.

[16]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 156.

[17]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 157.

[18]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 26, September 1928, p. 2 and no. 47, March 1931, p. 1.

Under such reform-minded Christian liberal influences, the CPWS came out strongly in support of segregationist ideals in 1923, when the organisation welcomed the Urban Areas Bill which sought to entrench the development of the location system. Echoing the sentiments of the CPWS Executive, Canon Lavis publicly praised the Bill as a "great step forward".[19] Provision for the introduction of municipal drinking canteens in locations, which were seen to profit the local city councils, was the only subject of protest raised in relation to the Bill.[20] Thereafter, the CPWS hailed the decision to remove Africans from Ndabeni to a new location. Lavis's views were again representative as he described this development as an "act of justice" and a "rescue from the slums" which would, at the same time, be "a liberation for the Coloureds", who would no longer have to compete with Africans for houses.[21] As an executive member, Father Savage, too, welcomed the possibility for a new "civilised and happy village" to develop and encouraged Africans to apply for "better class accommodation" in the new location which would be "more civilised and comfortable".[22] Nevertheless, while welcoming the introduction of a "proclaimed area for natives", he was, at the same time, sceptical of the suggested "pass laws, indentured servitude [and] curfew bells" that the Bill seemed to imply.[23] During the 1920s, the CPWS also called for certain forms of influx control, although these requests, similar to those of the WCTU and the Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, were tempered by the organisation's aversion to the rigid pass laws and contract labour system of the highveld region.

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[19]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 125.

[20]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 14 April 1923, pp. 138-139.

[21]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 125.

[22]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 38, December 1929, p. 2 and no. 8, February 1927, p. 2.

[23]Cape Times, 24 January 1924.

Under the influence of leading black and white Christians, another important early concern of the Welfare Society involved the protection and expansion of the Cape liberal tradition on the basis of a so-called "consistent Christian position". Father Savage was particularly forthright in his campaigning for "equal rights for all civilised men", arguing forcefully for "full Christian statesmanship" for those who proved themselves capable on socio-economic and religious grounds. To this end, the CPWS vigorously opposed the proposed Hertzog "Native Bills" of 1926, which sought to remove remaining Cape African franchise rights. On behalf of the Society, Savage labelled the Bills as "reactionary, a lamentable contrast to the tendency of the enlightened world opinion on racial problems" and staunchly opposed any reversal of the Cape policy of "encouragement and freedom".[24] He admonished authorities to look towards the "wide and generous" policies of the British Government, which, in his view, provided an appropriate framework for the guarantee of "native rights and the ideals of progress".[25]

On 28 June 1927, the CPWS became the Cape Peninsula Joint Council of Europeans and Bantu, in many ways resembling the inter-racial committees of the American South. The Joint Council continued to mobilise liberal whites and petty bourgeois blacks by drawing heavily on the mission church network. Towards the end of the 1920s, Rev. Mtimkulu from the Wesleyan Mission in Ndabeni, was playing a key organisational role as he attempted to gain a wider sphere of influence by holding separate recruitment meetings for Africans in the location.[26] With the later removal of Ndabeni residents to Langa, most black members in the 1930s were drawn from the newly-established Anglican and Methodist Churches in Langa, as well as from some of the other

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[24]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 9, March 1927, p. 3 and no. 33, June 1929, p. 1.

[25]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 13, July 1927, p. 2.

[26]SAL, Ixilongo, no. 13, July 1927, p. 7.

yokwenyani churches. Prominent Christian leaders on the Joint Council from Langa included the Reverends Bull, Savage, Mbizela, Mvambo, Tladi, Citashe and Ndibongo.

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, the initiatives of the JC, therefore, remained influenced by the combination of conservative and liberal tendencies inherent within mission Christianity. In view of the impending Hertzog "Native" legislation, the JC continued to advocate "full Christian statesmanship" for the capable black Christian elite. With its roots in the Social Gospel of the CPWS, the JC still functioned as a local welfare body, by dealing with local consequences of policy rather than trying to challenge policy itself. Thus, when the CC began the forcible removal of single Africans from city slums and the Cape flats to Langa in September 1927, the JC merely sought to protest against the high cost of living which prevented many prospective residents from moving to Langa of their own accord. The JC argued rather, for a reduction in the cost of rentals and transport to and from Langa, as well as for an increase in living wages, so as to entice Africans to Langa without having to use compulsion.[27] Similarly, when the CC began removing residents from Ndabeni to Langa, again without questioning the actual ejection order, the Joint Council was strictly concerned about the CC's coercive methods of transferral.[28] African members of the JC had wished to appeal to the Privy Council in England in 1931 as a means of protesting against the ejection order. However, they were advised by white JC members that such bold steps would be "unwise". In the view of the white committee, even if the appeal was won, the law would simply be amended to grant the CC powers of removal. Apparently somewhat "shaken" and "confused" by the counsel of their "true white friends", the African members

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[27]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 133.

[28]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 21 July 1930; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 27 November 1931; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 136.

backed down.[29] Again, in 1932, in the context of the revision of the Native Registration Regulations, the JC preferred once more to submit specific alterations in cases where they believed constitutional solutions were necessary. Such responses were limited, partly because most white JC members considered that some form of influx control was necessary to protect the already-settled population with regard to work and keeping bread in their mouths, as well as to avoid the "problem" of "renewed local destitution". Thus, in reaction to proposed increased restrictions on the entry and residence of Africans in urban areas, the JC sought only specific modifications and cancellation of the "worst elements" of the regulations. Along with similar proposals from the local branch of the liberal National Council of Women and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the JC deputation simply tried to ensure that the restrictive pass system of the North was not introduced into the Cape in its entirety.[30] Further deputations to the CC, led by a strong contingent of black and white Christians on the JC, also sought to achieve practical solutions to problems of rent, transport, living conditions and a lack of civil and entertainment amenities. With regard to cultural facilities, the JC in 1936 prevailed upon white rate-payers to shoulder expenses for better African living conditions, considering that Africans were compelled to live in Langa "for the benefit of whites". In this respect, the JC argued that the Christian "democratic principle", whereby the poor ought to be assisted by the rich, should be applied.[31]

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[29]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 5 November 1931, pp. 19-20.

[30]BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 11 March 1932, p. 116; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 9 March 1932.

[31]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, NAB minutes, 24 November 1931 (annexure to NAC minutes); 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/8, minutes of the NAC, 9 October 1936; 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 10 December 1937.

Apart from their crucial role on the JC, the black Christian elite was also encouraged to participate as individuals in the affairs local Advisory Boards and Vigilance Associations, as part of their Christian service and civic duty to the community. Especially during the 1920s and early 1930s, the concerns of local petty bourgeois Christians dominated the proceedings of these civic organisations, in close association with local mission churches and other Christian, political and liberal organisations such as the JC, the ANC, WCTU and the National Council of Women. The clergy set the pattern for Christian representation in Ndabeni by becoming heavily involved as both elected and appointed Advisory Board (AB) and Vigilance Association (VA) members. In this regard, the Reverends Mahabane, Mtimkulu, Matshikwe, Olifan, Papu, Moleboloa, Sihlali, Andonai and Mdolomba were prominent. It was not surprising that Christian participation in these bodies was so high and received encouragement from local respectable churches and Christian liberal organisations, given that the very objectives and structure of the organisations meshed with the reformist and civic orientation of mission social ideals. Essentially, Advisory Boards were designed as statutory bodies through which "legitimate" African concerns and grievances were to be channelled to the local authorities. They had no executive powers, but were rather designed to co-operate in subordination to white patronage. Basically, they have been described as being created by the state to co-opt support from moderate blacks as a bloc, in driving a stabilising wedge between the working class and the petty bourgeoisie. In practice, local authorities elicited African participation on the basis that the educated should lead the uneducated masses towards civilisation and Christianity – a message similar to that of white Christian liberal organisations. In such circumstances, it becomes understandable to recognise the attraction of early Ndabeni Advisory Board representation to moderate and conservative Christians, especially from the established denominations, who were also prominently involved in Christian liberal groups. The basic constitutional procedures of the Advisory Board also overlapped with the "cap-in-hand" approach of the "old guard" Christian leadership, for whom humble deputations

and special pleading were the means of deriving concessions. The Vigilance Association, too, as established in Ndabeni in 1923 by Rev. Olifan, who had been a resident in the location since 1906, also conformed to the ambitions of elite Christians. In essence, the Ndabeni Vigilance Association was instituted as a civic organisation and informal residents' group without a party political programme. As an independent, non-statutory body, it sought to function as a pressure group, with the intention of influencing the actions of Board members and placing them under the supervision of the residents. The Association also oversaw the process of the election of Board members. Its lobbying functions were no different to those of the Advisory Board, although the Association was forced to gain an audience with the NAC through the constitutional channel of the Advisory Board. With its liberal and reformist slant, like the Advisory Board, it, too, easily attracted elite African Social Christians. Most of its membership in Ndabeni and later, Langa, was derived from the older, Christian and more conservative rent-payers of the married living quarters.[32]

During the 1920s and early 1930s, the local Advisory Boards and Vigilance Associations formed the vanguard of community-based protest, in relatively close relationship with the local branch of the African National Congress. With the ANC in the western Cape divided from around the mid-1920s, however, the NAB and NVA assumed the leading role in rallying residents behind local issues. The Reverends Mahabane, Matshikwe, Olifan and later Mtimkulu served as primary spokesmen for the organisations in Ndabeni, taking up a range of initiatives, despite the prescribed limitations imposed upon the functions of Advisory Boards and Vigilance Associations. In particular, they provided strong opposition leadership to restrictions on Cape

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[32]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 1 and box 5, LVA notes; Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, paper on local government in Langa, undated; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 106.

African voting rights, the closure of Ndabeni, the forcible removals to Langa, and the restrictive living conditions in both Ndabeni and early Langa. Empowered by the universalist message and optimism of mission ideology, as Chairman of the Ndabeni Vigilance Association, Rev. Olifan, for example, was prominent in rallying local opposition to restrictive African registration requirements introduced under section 12 of the Urban Areas Act, that began to be applied in full force in Cape Town from June 1926 onwards. He labelled the registration provisions "oppressive and inhumane", and also attacked the administrative authorities who sought to carry them out.[33] Olifan was particularly critical of the new Superintendent, G.P. Cook, and, at the request of the Ndabeni Vigilance Committee, issued a legal letter to the Secretary of Native Affairs to complain about his arbitrary actions and measures, pursued without consultation with the Ndabeni community.[34] In the process of the forced closure of Ndabeni and transferral to Langa, ministers were again at the forefront of hostile NAB and NVA resistance to local authorities who sought to enforce the removals via questionable legislation. Financed by collections "usually made on Sundays", the clergy, on behalf of organisations, filed a range of legal cases to challenge heavy-handed CC actions against Africans in Ndabeni and early Langa. In this way, test cases were fought, relatively successfully, against increased rents in Ndabeni intended to squeeze residents out of the location and into Langa.[35] The ministers were also influential in the Ndabeni Advisory Board's articulation of a range of grievances with regard to the early conditions in and occupation of Langa. As chief spokesman in a deputation to the CC in October 1927, Rev. Mtimkulu, for example, was strident in exposing the high railway fares to Langa, the rate of

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[33] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 1926, p. 85; Saunders, "From Ndabeni to Langa", pp. 182, 183.

[34] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 1926, p. 40; ibid., Loram's report, 20 June 1927, p. 3 (annexure to NAC minutes); Cape Times, 31 December 1926; Saunders, "From Ndabeni to Langa", p. 183.

[35] Saunders, "From Ndabeni to Langa", p. 198.

Langa rentals to the wages earned by Africans, the "unnatural, unhealthy and unsuitable" types of buildings, latrines and cooking facilities erected there, and the huge responsibilities placed on local Africans to pay for the entire cost of establishing the township.[36] On many occasions, such as this in October 1927, these deputations were arranged in alliance with the JC, with corporate appeals often being based on aspects of Christian morality. Rev. Matshikwe, in particular, was prone to soliciting for an improvement in African housing, accommodation and local rights "in the name of God and humanity" in the 1920s.[37]

In their respective civic roles, ministers certainly commanded a fair degree of popular support in providing a dissenting, if somewhat meekly concessionary, voice. Their relatively progressive leadership in the NAB and NVA, especially that of Mahabane, Mtimkulu and Olifan, contributed to the strong resistance which ensured that the demise of Ndabeni would be a drawn out process. Olifan's antagonism to Cook even made certain that he was replaced as NAB Chairman in 1929 by the more liberal Christian, W.G. Bennie, a veteran African educationalist, who still believed that "discriminatory practices" were necessary, because of "the great mass of uncivilised Native humanity".[38] At the same time, Christian leadership on the NAB and NVA was also constrained in its interventions by its preoccupation with the class and material interests of the black Christian elite, and by its promotion of certain conservative strands of Christian liberalism. Thus, in arguing against unsatisfactory conditions in Langa on behalf of the NAB in October 1927, rather than appear too anti-segregationist, Rev. Mtimkulu simply requested "just trusteeship", by urging the Council to act "the part of the father". At the same meeting, his partially segregationist and

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[36] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 25 October 1927.

[37] Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 208.

[38] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 1930, p. 602; Saunders, "From Ndabeni to Langa", pp. 193, 198.

pragmatic standpoint was evident in his argument for the employment of local African authorities and not white officials in Langa, as an opportunity for the African to "walk alone".[39] In addition, certain NAB and NVA resolutions and concerns were highly indicative of such restrained tendencies. Motions put forward by the more conservative Matshikwe, who did not enjoy the same degree of public support as Mahabane, Mtimkulu and Olifan,[40] particularly reflected this. Matshikwe, for instance, argued for the prohibition of "political strikes and agitation meetings" on Sundays, which, in his view, "were to the detriment of the people and the churches".[41] So far as political activities in general were concerned, most Christian Board members – both conservative and liberal alike – showed a naturally strong aversion to the local promotion of communism in the 1920s and early 1930s. During this time, they lobbied township officials to obstruct the holding of local communist meetings, with some success, as these were viewed as "anti-Christ" activities. Together with other mission clergy, they also kept the local authorities informed about communist undertakings by handing over their manifestos and programmes.[42] Not least as a result of the forceful and vociferous anti-communist sentiments of more conservative Board members, communism failed to gain a stronghold in Ndabeni and Langa during this period.

Further conservative Christian-based ideas were expressed in Christian Board members' attitudes to the drink issue, which mirrored local church responses. The liquor question became a pressing concern for them in the late 1920s and early 1930s, as, in their words, "if it was not for the Drink

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[39] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 25 October 1927.

[40] Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 211.

[41] Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 214.

[42] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 15 April 1929; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/3, NAB minutes, 28 October 1930 (annexure to NAC minutes); BC 1034, AB 1929, The Cowley Evangelist, 1 February 1935, p. 164.

Traffic, the Churches would be [full]".[43] On the grounds that alcohol was a major hindrance to the development of civilisation and Christianity, and a fundamental cause of local community dislocation, Christian Board members in Ndabeni had a long history of being vehement supporters of temperance and prohibitionism. They had vigorously opposed the Liquor Bill of 1926 which made provision for the institution of wine canteens in locations under municipal control, on the basis that it lowered the standards of the residents and increased crime.[44] With the opening of Langa, they had, further, supported the establishment of the new township as a "dry area" and opposed the issuing of "kaffir" beer permits on the premise that it would be women of a lower class, who would be receiving them. They preferred to support the CC's decision to prohibit beer in Langa until such time that a "better class" of "responsible Africans" was settled in the married quarters, who could better manage such delicate sales if matters were to come to that.[45] When, in 1931, the Council later rescinded its previous resolution to designate Langa as a dry area and instead made provisions for granting kaffir beer permits as a result of the municipal failure to prevent illicit brewing, the Christian Board members, Revs. Mtimkulu and Olifan, went so far as to propose a discrete housing scheme in Langa that would provide a "dry area" for the "better class of Native", separate from those who desired kaffir beer.[46] In this attempt to use Christian morality to push for class differentiation in the material interests of the Christian elite, representative Ndabeni Board ministers crisply revealed the classic tenets of Christian liberalism.

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[43] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, NAB minutes, 16 July 1928 (annexure to NAC minutes). The entry in the minutes actually reads "the Churches would be empty". As such, the Board members might have meant by this that many Ndabeni residents ruined their lives because of alcoholic consumption, with the result that they landed up in churches, which were left with the task of rehabilitating them. From the broader discussion recorded at the meeting, though, it would appear that the word "empty" was mistakenly entered and that the word "full" was rather intended.

[44] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 16 April 1926, p. 37.

[45] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/2, NAB minutes, 15 May 1928 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[46] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/3, NAB minutes, 15 June 1931 (annexure to NAC minutes).

This combination of progressive and conservative NAB and NVA responses set the tone for Christian elitist involvement in the corresponding representative bodies in Langa. From the inception of the LAB and LVA, prominent clergy and petty bourgeois Christians dominated proceedings. The Reverends Mvambo, Mbizela, Xibenye and Citashe were influential members on the LAB and LVA, together with socially active mission Christians such as J.W. Carrol and G. Nongauza. In a close association with the NAB which existed until the closure of Ndabeni in 1935, the LAB continued to challenge a wide variety of council decisions regarding the early development of Langa in the 1930s, especially with respect to matters of housing and urban rights. Relations with the JC were also strong in the early 1930s, as the LAB and LVA allied with Christian liberal organisations to make corporate appeals on local issues to the CC. Especially with W.G. Mears – a Methodist supporter, Rondebosch Boys' High Principal and JC member – acting as Chairman of the LAB in the 1930s, as well as the JC repeatedly inviting mostly Christian LAB members to conferences of the SAIRR, this partnership was strengthened.[47]

Despite the fact that Christian leadership on the LAB and LVA continued to provide the fundamental source of community-based protest, the nature of this opposition began to lose its progressive political edge in the early 1930s. Partly due to the local harsh effects of the Great Depression and contemporaneous internal dissension within the ANC in the western Cape, overt political activity in general declined dramatically. The majority of residents began to show great apathy towards the activities of the LAB and LVA during this period. Vigilance Association *umzi* (meetings) rarely mustered more than 30 to 40 adults. Elections aroused little interest with the average poll being a lowly 60 to 80 voters and seats were frequently not even contested.

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[47] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, LAB minutes, 23 May 1933 (annexure to NAC minutes); 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/9, minutes of the NAC, 19 December 1941.

Indifference seems even to have predominated amongst the elite group of teachers, clerks and ministers. Whereas Ndabeni ministers such as Mahabane and Mtimkulu had energetically combined their Cape ANC commitments with their Advisory Board and Vigilance Association responsibilities, given the current decline of and political bickering within the local ANC, Langa clergy represented on the Advisory Board were reported increasingly to be "staying out of anything that smacks of politics", as they preferred to view their roles in terms of individualistic civic duties and not in terms of party political programmes.[48] In this context, the concerns of the LAB and LVA became ever more narrowly focused, with ecclesiastical representations directing the agenda in a more conservative direction. To this end, anti-communist and anti-drink resolutions began to feature prominently as Board members resolved to try to obstruct the rise of communism in Langa and questioned council plans for the further extension of beer permits in July 1933.[49]

The conservative tack in local Advisory Board affairs nevertheless encouraged the rise of a more progressive faction – made up of some Christians and non-Christians alike – towards the mid-1930s. The anti-drink crusade of the AB members, Rev. Mvambo, Carroll and Nongauza in particular, provoked a strong reaction, which brought renewed interest in AB affairs and underlined the growing disparity between the conservative Christian and more progressive Board members. By 1934, a kaffir beer voter section had emerged to ensure that prohibitionist Board members were not elected again.[50] During 1934, the whole question of a "dry area" in Langa brought unprecedented interest in the LAB elections. The outcome came in a heavy defeat for

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[48]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, paper on local government in Langa, undated.

[49]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, LAB minutes, 18 July 1933 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[50]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 14 February 1934.

"dry area" advocates, as all six elected places on the LAB went to "no dry area" candidates, these having argued successfully that temperance was contrary to African custom and would create "an undesirable division of residents".[51] From this time onwards, the more conservative, teetotaller Christians who generally included ecclesiastical members, tended to be represented on the Board as part of three council nominees, rather than one of six elected members as had previously occurred.[52] Sharp divisions of opinion followed between the conservative and progressive Board members with different strands of Christianity – one more liberal, one more conservative – being used divergently to clarify their respective positions. From the mid-1930s, council nominees appear to have aroused considerable resentment amongst the residents and came to be viewed with much suspicion. They were considered lackeys and became increasingly alienated from the majority of residents. The ecclesiastical representatives, especially, were chastised for their willingness to co-operate with the local authorities. In this context of public antagonism, and having failed to secure the election of strongly conservative candidates to the Board as had been common in the past, a despairing Nongauza proposed a prescriptive social measure at a Board meeting in 1936:

> a man who is not married under Christian rites, or not living in a recognised Christian style, should not be eligible to represent the Married Quarters residents on the Location Advisory Board.[53]

Being in the minority, the resolution came to nothing. Yet, such responses were indicative of the cleavages that would grow over time between more conservative and more liberal Christian alike,

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[51] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/5, minutes of the NAC, 15 May 1934; ibid., LAB minutes, 12 June 1934 (annexure to NAC minutes); ibid., minutes of the NAC, 16 May 1935.

[52] Notice that the Langa Advisory Board consisted of nine members of which three were appointed by the City Council and six were elected by the local community according to the local Advisory Board Regulation 53.

[53] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/8, minutes of the NAC, 16 April 1936.

especially as party political programmes began to play an influential role in local civic organisations from the latter part of the 1930s.

Closely associated with the local Advisory Boards and the Vigilance Associations in the 1920s and early 1930s were also the early African political parties – the Cape NNC (later the ANC) and the Cape African Congress (CAC) – in which elitist African Social Christians were once again at the forefront. In continuity with the initial emergence of the SANNC in 1912 and the CAC, which depended largely on the leadership of ministers and church leaders, the local party branches in Ndabeni and later Langa both relied heavily at first on respectable clergy and petty bourgeois Christians, such as the Reverends Mahabane and Tladi, for direction and command. Although not as active and influential as the Advisory Boards and Vigilance Associations during this period, the local branches under ecclesiastical leadership had nevertheless joined with the CPWS, the JC, WCTU, the National Council of Women and the civic organisations in opposition to a diverse range of local legislation. As head of the local branch of the Cape NNC, Reverend Mahabane had, for example, featured noticeably in local denunciation of the draft of the Natives (Urban Areas) Bill. In 1918, Mahabane was in fact elected provincial leader of the SANNC and, after leaving Ndabeni in 1922, later became the moderate national president of the then ANC in 1924.[54] In tandem with their representation on the civic organisations, the Christian leadership, acting for the ANC, had also contributed to local resistance to Cape disenfranchisement, the closure of Ndabeni, the forcible removals to Langa and restrictive living conditions in Ndabeni and early Langa, by means of deputations and letters of protest.

Although providing an important voice of protest, leadership at the same time, bound local political parties to the principles of mission political ideology, in a manner parallel to their

[54]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 202.

ideological influence on civic organisations. Partly due to the class interests of mission Christianity, the Christian leaders tended to run the local political parties as exclusive clubs, serving the particular concerns of the petty bourgeoisie, rather than as representing the wider interests and needs of the broader African community. To this end, like their early founders, they tended to focus their attention on issues pertinent to their class, such as political disenfranchisement, education and trading rights. Even when they addressed broader concerns of land and labour, they tended to base their arguments primarily on the interests of the married and urbanised residents. For example, although Mahabane was opposed in principle to constant removals, his position was nevertheless weakened in that he spoke only for the married permanent residents, who, he conceded, were at the same time prepared to accept other sites on the basis of the existing "debased" conditions in Ndabeni.[55] Much of the early ANC resistance also continued to be based on religious appeals to Christian morality, so that the local branches mainly attracted an elite core. Local church leadership even restricted a wider membership from developing by failing to harness active support for African political parties which they fostered for their own, more practically Christian social welfare ventures. White-led missions in Ndabeni and later Langa also tended to view parties like the ANC with a degree of suspicion and detachment, being especially wary of what was conceived as their exclusive nationalist inclinations, as opposed to the universal ethic of Christian mission. For this reason, they instead preferred to encourage the existence of their more closely related multi-racial organisations, like the CPWS and later the JC, where white clergy in particular could assume a leading role.

As a result of partisan interests, reformism and a failure to gain broad-based community support, growing contradictions began to emerge between the moderate "old guard" Christian leadership

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[55]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 212.

and the more radically-orientated younger elements by 1926. Against the background of a groundswell of populist opposition to the introduction of the Hertzog "Native Bills" in 1926, the first attempts to implement the registration regulations under the Urban Areas Act, as well as renewed threats of forced removals to Langa, weak and divisive responses from the Christian leadership deeply compromised the "old guard". The appointment in 1926 of the increasingly moderate Garveyist, "Professor" James S. Thaele as Acting Chairman of the local branch by the national President-General, Mahabane, further incensed the more militant group.[56] By the late 1920s, the local ANC branch had divided into two factions and was holding rival meetings.

It is noteworthy to elaborate on the growing antagonism towards Thaele, since as an influential Garveyist and critic of meek Christian appeals in the political arena, he, unlike others, was not opposed for having a reformist or Christian moral stance. Instead, he became gradually rejected primarily because of his developing brand of Garveyism and growing vacillation and conservatism by 1930. Having been influenced by the African nationalism of Marcus Garvey while in America, Thaele appeared initially radical as he sought to apply Garvey's principle of "Africa for the Africans" in the South African context. In the early 1920s, he had attacked mission-orientated Africans (whom he derogatorily labelled the "good boys") for holding to the liberal virtues of race relations and for making appeals to imperial Britain and Christian morality, which he believed operated to perpetuate the system of oppression in South Africa. He argued that blacks had to work out their own liberation in both the political and religious spheres, and suggested that an analysis of the class position of black workers in the capitalist system of South Africa was crucial to African freedom.[57] Despite some inflammatory attacks on conservative Christians, and

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[56]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", pp. 223, 224; Saunders, "From Ndabeni to Langa", p. 182.

[57]T. Karis and G.M. Carter (eds.), From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, (Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1973), vol. 2, pp. 214-215; Elphick, "The

although infusing the Cape branch of the ANC with the popular symbols and rhetoric of Garveyism, he failed ultimately to mobilise a broad base of working-class support in Cape Town and, ironically, instead received a strong element of moderate Christian support by the early 1930s. This occurred in part to local circumstances, as well as to Thaele's contradictory ideological beliefs. For all his outspoken populism and apparent hostility to mission Christians, Thaele was strongly anti-communist and did not necessarily oppose Christianity itself. In fact, many of his ideas were in line with Social Gospel convictions. As Garvey has been shown to have retained the Judaeo-Christian tradition in developing a theology for black people, so Thaele saw value in the cosmogonies of Moses and biblical history of the prophet Isaiah to support a movement of protest.[58] Thaele's anti-communism stemmed from Garvey's opposition to communism and Marxism, both of which he believed to be antithetical to the interests of black Americans, especially since a communist government in the United States, in his view, would strengthen the most racist section of American society, the white working class. Thaele's anti-white sentiments, similar to those of Garvey, also prevented him from co-operating with European communists and white South African socialists. When the International Socialist League, forerunner of the Communist Party of South Africa, passed a resolution in 1921 decrying "Africa for the Africans" on the grounds that it was reactionary in South Africa (since "whites had come to stay"), his anti-communism was especially heightened.[59] Further contradictions in

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Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel", p. 359; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, pp. 94, 129, 228.

[58]Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel", p. 359; Karis and Carter, From Protest to Challenge, 1972, vol. 1, p. 216; R.K. Burkett, Garveyism as a Religious Movement: The Institutionalisation of a Black Civil Religion, (New Jersey and London, The Scarecrow Press and The American Theological Library Association, 1978), p. xix; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, p. 228. Notice, too, that Garvey was influenced to some degree by Booker T. Washington. Burkett contends that his first inspiration to action came from reading Washington's autobiography, Up from Slavery. See Burkett, Garveyism as a Religious Movement, p. 1.

[59]Burkett, Garveyism as a Religious Movement, p. 10, footnote 1; R.A. Hill and G.A. Pirio, " 'Africa for the Africans': The Garvey Movement in South Africa, 1920-1940" in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds.), The

Thaele's approach were displayed in practice in his growing concern to uphold the interests of the African elite to the neglect of workers' grievances. He also supported Hertzog's "Native Bills" as offering opportunities for black self-determination.[60]

Such increasingly conservative responses alienated Thaele from the younger radicals, who were, to some extent, inspired by the fiery criticisms of the Communist Party towards the end of the 1920s.[61] Conversely, Thaele's growing caution and fierce anti-communism naturally attracted conservative petty bourgeois Christian support from both the local mission and independent churches. This reflected something of what Burkett and Drake have indicated about the support-base of Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which included many black churchmen from the mainline Protestant and independent churches, who viewed the UNIA as an additional vehicle for realising some of the aims of the Social Gospel.[62] In the Cape Town case, much of the Christian backing was based on the anti-communist idea, which was obviously motivated by the strong religious aversion to the perceived "atheistic" doctrines of communism. By the late 1920s, Thaele's supporters – mostly more conservative Christians – were going so far as to make physical attacks on communists at their own meetings. In November 1930, the more radical and progressive youthful element made a complete break by forming their own independent ANC branch. They had tired of the "old guard's" cordial relations with the local

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Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa, (London, Longman, 1987), p. 232.

[60]V. Bickford-Smith, E. van Heyningen and N. Worden, Cape Town in the Twentieth Century: An Illustrated Social History, (Cape Town, David Philip, 1999), pp. 90, 91.

[61]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", pp. 224, 225.

[62]Burkett, Garveyism as a Religious Movement, pp. xvii, xx.

authorities, conventional Christian appeals, the anti-communist stance and moderate forms of protest.[63]

During the 1930s, this ideological power struggle within the local ANC intensified. This was the environment in which early Langa political activity became embroiled as the more conservative Christian faction contended for dominance with the more radical subdivision – made up of progressive Christians and non-Christians alike. Along with the deprivations and difficulties of the Great Depression, this internal discord stunted the advance of local resistance politics as the party was in disarray by the mid-1930s. In particular, the anti-communist stance of the more conservative, Christian-based ANC (Western Cape) under Thaele kept this internal power struggle alive to weaken the political influence of the rival Cape ANC for most of the 1930s. Thaele, for example, deepened the split with the rival progressive ANC (Western Province) under Alfred Coto when he expelled communists from his grouping. Increasing attacks by Thaele's faction on communist meetings also brought resentment from the ANC (WP). Divisions between the opposing groups were especially heightened in the run up to the 1937 election of Donald B. Molteno as the Native Representative, again over the question of communist affinities. As a progressive and leading JC member who had strong links with prominent communists such as Moses Kotane and Bunting, Molteno received the support of the ANC (WP), the communist-oriented Cape Guardian, as well as progressive elements within the National ANC Executive, the AAC and the Cape Native Voters' Association as their Native Representative. Fearing the subversive communist influences upon Molteno from the rival ANC (WP), the AAC and Cape Guardian, the ANC (WC) preferred to support the candidature of the moderate businessman and textile manufacturer, Morris Mauerberger. In this regard, the ANC (WC) aligned itself on

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[63]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town to 1936", p. 225.

Mauerberger's election committee with conservative forces in the Cape Native Voters' Association, the CAC, the Langa Advisory Board and Vigilance Committee.[64] The respective campaigns provoked much animosity between the rival factions. The election ended with a victory for Molteno, which effectively served to weaken the more conservative bloc. As a result of the antagonism towards communists, a number of members which included more progressive churchmen, who were also closely associated with the JC, defected from the ANC (WC) to join the ANC (WP).[65] Support for Molteno, at the same time, reflected the growing disparity between conservatives and the local JC, which was feared to be subjecting itself to the grip of communist tendencies, given the fact that leading communists such as Kotane and Bunting were influential members during this period. Their presence concerned black Christian conservatives, and increasingly only progressive churchmen found themselves associated with the Joint Council. These tensions within the local ANC, JC, LAB and LVA, underlined to a degree by diverse religious attitudes, would continue to be evident in the late 1930s and throughout the 1940s, though in a markedly different context where the balance of forces would shift emphatically to the left at the expense of the cosy consensus of the "old guard" leadership.

3.2 Social Christianity and the rise of progressive forces and an anti-segregationist "United Front"

As local black politics came to be dominated by a plethora of more radical, left wing ideas, it saw the corresponding emergence of a new generation of more popularly-orientated petty bourgeois leaders in Langa. As these men moved to marshal a more politicised local resistance movement during the late 1930s and 1940s, Social Christianity – in both its conservative and progressive

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[64]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 60, 62, 64.

[65]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 69.

strands – continued to be highly influential in shaping this process of transformation and its developing character. On the one hand, more conventional Christianity (and its deferential associations) of black conservatives provided an important sounding board against which progressive action emerged in response. On the other hand, the very religious motives of African Social Christians, more closely related to the progressive strands of the Social Gospel, proved paramount to the developing character and functions of an emergent anti-segregationist United Front bloc, as progressive Christians emerged at the forefront of the alliance during this period of increasing radicalisation and polarisation within local community politics.

In the local context of the CC's pre-determined expansion of its municipalisation interests, and with "Native Policy" hardening during the late 1930s and 1940s as residential patterns in Cape Town were tightened following a growing housing crisis caused by rapid wartime urbanisation, so far as direct Langa church responses were concerned, little contribution was made to the growing politicisation and critical articulation of community protest. Most of the black clergy in mission churches continued to rely on their white counterparts in the Cape liberal reformist tradition, who occasionally led delegations of protest on behalf of the black congregations. To some further extent, the potential voice of African clergy was also muffled as white ministers sought to retain their dominance within regional church structures. For example, in the face of appeals made by the Langa Methodist Church for African representation on the Cape Peninsula Church Council in 1944, the all-white body took no action, preferring to maintain the status quo, despite being conscious of the fact that the constitution placed no restrictions upon black involvement.[66] Therefore, white-controlled ecclesiastical organisations mostly continued to lead the few moments of protest. Most broader religious appeals in the 1940s made by white-dominated

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[66]BC 878, Cape Peninsula Church Council minutes, 14 April 1944.

synods and provincial ecclesiastical bodies remained generalised and paternalistic in nature. When they were specifically related to local African issues in the western Cape, the objections continued to reflect the practical and remedial concerns of the white leadership, rather than any critique of the Cape racial order. For example, at a time when residential segregation patterns were being entrenched in the 1940s, the Cape Episcopal Synod of the Church of the Province of South Africa mainly found it necessary to protest over issues in Langa such as bullying treatment in liquor searches and the unjust public inspections of individuals on unreasonable grounds, to the neglect of broader principles of oppression.[67] The CPCC, too, simply sought incidental changes and reform to the proposed Native Bill in 1937, the Colour Bar and Factories Bill in 1941, and the proposed pass laws in 1945 and 1947,[68] rather than advocate outright rejection of discriminatory legislation. These appeals were further limited in their impact in that the CPCC nodded at the CC in its praise for the "noble" council endeavours to uplift the "Native" through its housing and health schemes.[69]

Local corporate religious responses were also scarce on account of the majority of black ministers seeking to stay out of politics and rather becoming self-absorbed with their spiritual duties as the balance of political forces shifted to the left. African clergy did, nevertheless, organise themselves into the Langa-based Cape Peninsula Interdenominational African Ministers' Association (CPIDAMASA) by the mid-1940s.[70] Ministers made use of the forum to lament the

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[67]Molteno Papers, BC 579, document A.24.431, 1943; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 67.

[68]BC 878, Cape Peninsula Church Council minutes, 21 April 1937, 5 June 1941, 27 November 1945 and 26 August 1947.

[69]BC 878, Cape Peninsula Church Council minutes, 18 July 1938.

[70]Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 30 October 1946.

harshness of social living conditions in Langa, though few official socio-political objections emanated directly from this platform. Its focus was primarily on the narrow local religious issues which directly affected the churches. These strictly religious concerns were starkly portrayed in the 1940s in one of the few deputations made to the NAC by the CPIDAMASA, in opposition to a proposed amendment to the Langa Location Regulations put forward in 1948. Whereas other organisations such as the ANC, CP, LVA and LAB used the occasion to challenge the regulations and conditions in Langa in general – the high increase in rents, the indignity of public inspections and the discrimination of the pass system – the CPIDAMASA was simply concerned about one amendment to Section 24. This clause made provision for the introduction of an entrance-permit system for Africans visiting Langa. The CPIDAMASA opposed this restriction only inasmuch as this would effect people attending church from outside Langa. Ministers argued that the inconvenience of the system would detract from Africans attending church in Langa. They believed that the imposition of the entrance permit was an insult to the "law-abiding, honest and respectable" religious citizens and the churches they attended. For these primarily religious reasons, they asked for the system to be abandoned.[71] The basis of the clergy's opposition to this particular clause differed substantially from political and civic organisations, which resisted the entrance permits on the grounds of violating the principle of freedom of movement and the confidentiality of relational visits, whether for personal or domestic reasons. They also opposed the system because of its deliberate intention to curtail the influence of political leaders, to make criminals of Africans on the basis of technical offences, and to provide additional white staff salaries to be met by black ratepayers.[72] Significantly, the local authorities proved most sympathetic to the objections of the CPIDAMASA by suggesting the addition of a proviso to

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[71] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, minutes of the NAC, 12 July 1948.

[72] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, minutes of the NAC, 17 August 1948.

Section 24 which would exempt certain defined classes or categories of visitors from having to gain entrance-permits, such as those whose purpose was to receive "divine ministrations".[73]

Again, it was only in relation to the liquor question that local churches mobilised extensively in opposition, along with a host of other Cape Peninsula civic, political and church organisations, in a relatively successful fashion. Thus, when in 1937 the Native Laws Amendment Act no. 46 was introduced, allowing for a municipal monopoly over liquor traffic in townships as a replacement for the permit system, local African clergy came out strongly against the CC's subsequent intentions to assume exclusive rights to the manufacture, sale and supply of kaffir beer in Langa as part of their general municipalisation plans. The ministers chose to submit their disapproval to the allied deputation of established church groups such as the CPCC, the Methodist Women's Auxiliary of the Cape District, the Western District Congregational Women's Association of South Africa, the Women's Association of the Camps Bay Interdenominational Church and the Western District Association of Congregational Churches, which combined with the JC, LVA, Bantu Commercial Union and the Cape Town branch of the National Council of Women of South Africa to protest against the CC's "hidden" intentions to manipulate the liquor monopoly as a profit-making scheme.[74] This rather weakened the voice of black clergy, as the broader deputations were predominantly white in composition, which meant that their resolutions continued to reflect more white concerns. The Congregational Women's Association (CWA), for example, based its arguments on the welfare of the more permanent population and their families around which mission work centred. In this way, the organisation neglected objections from migrant "single" men, whose views from their perspective, were unimportant to the issue,

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[73] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/13, minutes of the NAC, 12 July 1948; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/14, minutes of the NAC, 13 September 1948.

[74] 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 16 March 1939.

because of their temporary residence in Langa. The CWA was mainly concerned that the municipal beerhall would foster drunkenness amongst "bachelors", which would be primarily detrimental to the rest of law-abiding Langa. In an unorthodox statement, the Association did, however, request the NAC to direct its attentions rather to housing deficiencies, and argued for the principle that amenities should be provided through the ordinary channels of city finance and not through beerhall profits.[75] Similarly, the CPCC, which led a deputation on behalf of the Anglicans, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, Society of Friends and temperance bodies, centred its protest on behalf of well-to-do Africans in Langa by arguing likewise that the proposed beerhall would bring detrimental effects to their spiritual, social and moral upliftment. Rather than confront the basis of CC intentions, the CPCC became especially preoccupied with the Council's proposal to sell beer on Sundays. The obsession with this municipal attack on the sanctity of the Sabbath – considered "blasphemous" and "biblically unethical", with the effect of reducing church attendance – took precedence to the neglect of other related issues at hand.[76] Despite this narrowness in their responses, broader church groups generally represented local African ecclesiastical viewpoints reasonably closely. By arguing, firstly, for total prohibition, with the provision that in the event of the official sanctioning of either domestic brewing or municipal supply, domestic brewing was to be chosen as the lesser evil, these organisations articulated the attitudes of most local clergy quite well.

As part of the ecclesiastical protest at the municipalisation of liquor, a few local black clergy did, by contrast, begin to advance a more progressive critique which made a contribution to the increasingly critical articulation of substantive community protest. By drawing upon both African

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[75] 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 28 June 1938.

[76] 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 18 July 1938; BC 878, CPCC minutes, 18 July 1938; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 74.

and Social Gospel religious resources, as noted in chapter one, some individuals argued that the domestic brewing of kaffir beer was part of a religious way of life which was both African and Christian. Rev. Citashe, for example, considered beer brewing to be a national custom, intimately connected to virtually all African functions and gatherings. He contended that the European conception of a public house was "alien" and rejected beerhalls as "drinking in a cage". Consequently, he actively promoted an "indigenous system of hospitality".[77] A minority of white liberal clergy, including Savage, also began to change their views to support this progressive interpretation of home brewing. Whereas Savage had argued for prohibitionism and government restrictions on domestic brewing in the 1920s for the reason that it was not in accord with civilised rites, by 1938 he had come to view African customs in a more positive way. His ideas, like those of Citashe, began to reflect growing African opinion on the question which rejected the beerhall system on the grounds of its being alien to traditional drinking customs.[78]

Due to the strong responses from local conservative and progressive Christians, together with the strength of collective pressures from a range of political, cultural and religious organisations, the CC was forced to shelve its plans for the municipalisation of kaffir beer in 1940.[79] Nevertheless, it persisted with its proposals by introducing the subject once more in 1947, when it was again met with strongly organised resistance which included an important voice from church bodies.[80] On behalf of local African clergy in the Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Lutheran, Methodist,

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[77] 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/1, minutes of the NAC, 19 October 1938; 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/2, minutes of the NAC, 16 March 1939.

[78] Savage's views were, to some extent, transformed as a result of changing JC attitudes on the matter, in which organisation he continued to play a crucial role. See Friedlander Papers, BC 580, Joint Council minutes, 7 June 1938.

[79] 3/CT 1/4/6/6/4/1/2, LAB minutes, 14 May 1940 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[80] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/12, minutes of the NAC, 14 March 1947.

Presbyterian and Salvation Army denominations, the white-dominated South African Temperance Alliance voiced strident disapproval of the evils of municipal beerhalls, along conservative Christian and humanitarian lines. Still speaking strictly for "respectable Native Africans", who were recognised to have "risen above the beer habit, and who regarded the Beer Halls as degrading and offensive to their Christian outlook on life", SATA argued its position in terms of the standard of education and Christian civilisation that many local Africans had reached. The protests of the Temperance Alliance were directed in response to the Native Laws Commissions Enquiry of 1947, which also dealt with questions of pass laws, labour and housing. Despite this opportunity for local church bodies to reflect the material concerns of the range of Africans in Langa, religious organisations such as SATA only saw fit to respond to the liquor issue.[81] The prominent role of religious organisations within collective opposition to beerhalls did, at least, prove important, as the CC was again forced to suspend its plans, having to wait until 1954 to revive the issue once more.

Apart from the liquor question, institutional dissent from the local churches remained notional as they continued to have little direct impact on the local political forum in the 1940s. Despite the ongoing placidity of the churches, individual Christians nonetheless still proved important in shaping local politics through their continued participation in the affairs of community, civic and political organisations. The role of progressive Christians during this period of growing politicisation and radicalisation was especially influential, though it is also illuminating to trace the declining hold of conservative Christian elements in serving to encourage the rise of more radical forces in Langa. In general, their lessening influence in community affairs related to issues of increasing fragmentation from within their ranks as they failed to intensify or reshape their

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[81] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/12, minutes of the NAC, 24 March 1947.

methods of protest in a local context which increasingly demanded more radical forms of action. In particular, their unbending religious-based antagonism towards communism alienated conservatives from progressive white and black liberals, and provoked growing opposition which served to undermine their former strength.

The situation and responses of black Christian conservatives on the JC by the end of the 1930s provides a case in point. By this time, it has already been noted that black Christian conservatives had become bitterly critical of the JC, which they accused of submitting itself to communist influences. As a result of progressives and communists assuming prominence in the organisation, conservatives steadily withdrew their membership. This had the effect of the JC declining in influence during the 1940s as it then lost much of its mission-based black support base. The conservative withdrawal and subsequent narrowing of JC concerns with its depleted constituency, also had the important consequence of alerting progressive Africans to the need to look to their own nationalist organisations as a means of effectively addressing black grievances. Increasingly, they directed their political activity into the ANC (WP), CP, LAB and LVA, and away from the JC. As a result, the JC became a platform simply for white-liberal protest, supported by token black conservatives and progressives. Throughout the 1940s, despite making occasional deputations of protest to the CC, the JC became reduced to functioning as a largely white, elite liberal discussion and welfare group. During the war, much of the Joint Council's attentions focused on the protection of the interests of Africans engaged in military service. From the mid-1940s, the JC concentrated its efforts upon the establishment of a Christmas cheer fund for African troops, bursaries for African students at UCT and plans for a medical clinic in Langa. The Council then slumped in its work from 1947 to 1949 by merely hearing speakers on African

issues with little corresponding action.[82] Unlike previously, white JC leaders by 1945 were even encouraging remaining black JC members to seek their own salvation through helping themselves, and by supporting their own black trade unions and political organisations, in which local liberals nevertheless somehow hoped to give the leading direction.[83] Consequently, the JC became effectively marginalised and redundant to the point that it disbanded in July 1949.[84]

The position of black Christian conservatives in local civic affairs by the 1940s was also being exposed at a time when civic organisations were shifting markedly from a localised and apolitical emphasis towards greater association with nationalist organisations, influenced in particular by progressive elements within the local branches of the NLL, ANC and CPSA. Conservative Christians vigorously opposed these "intrusions" into local civic affairs, but in such a way that, ironically, helped to strengthen the rise of progressive Langa forces in the 1940s.

Conservative Christians found themselves especially on the defence in the latter part of 1939, when the NLL became the first political party to entertain a dominant role in Langa's community politics through local civic organisations, as the ANC itself continued to be constrained by internal dissension. Although a predominantly coloured organisation in its formation in 1935, the NLL with its aims for total democracy and strategy of boycotts and strikes had managed to capture the support of certain progressive Africans from the married quarters since the establishment of its Langa local branch. From December 1939, the NLL used local civic organisations as a political platform by fielding candidates for the LAB and working closely with

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[82]Friedlander Papers, BC 580, Joint Council minutes, 1938-49 (see especially: 3 June 1941, 7 December 1943, 7 March 19, 6 February 1945, 1 May 1945, 3 June 1945 and 3 August 1948).

[83]Friedlander Papers, BC 580, Joint Council minutes, 3 June 1945.

[84]Friedlander Papers, BC 580, Joint Council minutes, 3 August 1948, 1 February 1949 and 6 July 1949.

the LVA. By 1941, all six elected Board members were closely aligned with the League, including the progressive Christian, William Ndunyane, who was a General Council League member and also Secretary of the local NLL branch.[85] Despite proving to be reformist in practice by following well-used constitutional methods of struggle, the local NLL branch became relatively successful in transmuting local community-based protest into the arena of national politics. To this end, during the early war years, progressive Christians such as Ndunyane made an important contribution to the NLL anti-segregation campaign of 1939 and NLL protests in relation to local and national issues of liquor raids, exorbitant rents and intolerable living conditions – sometimes made in coalition with the CPSA and Non-European United Front.[86] This intrusion of the NLL into local civic affairs was greatly resented by the conservative Christian council nominees on the LAB, at this stage represented by Rev. Citashe, H. Gcilishe and G. Nongauza. Since they continued to view their role as a civic responsibility for representing legitimate grievances to the authorities, they resented the party political programme of the elected members, whom they increasingly criticised for fanning the flames of popular protest. The apprehension and antagonism from conservatives polarised supporters of the nominated LAB members from those of the elected members and also caused internal divisions within the LVA. In the process, the conservative nominees lost support as their willingness to please the authorities was exposed. Citashe, in particular, was taken to task for describing the AB system as a "gesture of goodwill on the part of those in power" and for considering Superintendent Rogers, to be "his constituency [to whom he] must report everything".[87] Growing demands for him to stay out of

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[85]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 145, 147.

[86]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 69, 144; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 152.

[87]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker notes, March 1940; ibid., 21 March 1940. Notice, though, the contradictions in the views of Citashe. In many ways, he was "progressive". It has been clarified that he campaigned actively against the municipalisation of beerhalls by supporting the domestic brewing of kaffir beer on traditional grounds. He won favour this way by deriding other black ministers

community politics as an *umfundisi* (minister) arose, apparently, even from his own church followers.[88]

Following their loss of controlling influence to NLL pressures in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Citashe and his clique became further alienated by a revival of progressive ANC and CP forces in the local community politics of Langa, which overtook the dominant role of the NLL in civic organisations towards the mid-1940s. The NLL, by this time, was experiencing a range of internal divisions and, with its largely coloured constituency, was being forced to narrow its focus of attention upon coloured issues, especially as increasingly harsh discriminatory legislation was being directed against this community in the early war years. By contrast, the ANC (WP) and local branch of the CPSA had grown in stature by 1943. Both political groups had won significant support locally by taking more active and radical positions to that of the more conservative Western Cape Congress in the early war years. For example, their initial opposition to the war effort, based primarily on the argument that African rights should be clarified at home first before fighting for similar principles abroad (although also partly influenced by the Nazi-Communist Pact), won widespread favour. Their strong opposition to the religious-based arguments of conservatives, who sought to help defend Great Britain as the saviour nation which would usher in a new global Christian society, was especially and surprisingly embraced as progressives grew weary of such appeals.[89] Progressive opinion had also won support over conservative responses

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and women's *manyano* organisations for not taking a stronger stance on the issue. He was also part of the progressive element that supported Molteno in the 1937 and 1942 Native Representatives' elections (mainly because of his close friendship with Molteno). As such, he had been an elected member of the LAB as late as 1938. However, his support steadily declined as his Christian conservatism and anti-communism increasingly expressed itself. See Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker notes, 5 April 1940.

[88]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker notes, March 1940.

[89]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 154; Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 14 September 1940; Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, notes, 5 April 1940.

in the aftermath of repressive legislation in the late 1930s, which further isolated the Western Cape Congress. Finally, when CP and ANC progressive elements were again successful in returning Molteno as the Native Representative in 1942, their dominance over the ANC (WC) was assured.[90] Having consolidated their position and with the NLL in decline, the local ANC (WP) and CP thus forged a timeous and formidable alliance,[91] which allowed them to assume control over the direction of community-based resistance and civic affairs. The CP, in particular, entertained a strong influence in Langa, even superseding that of the ANC during the 1940s as the local branch proved successful in identifying with the struggles of a broad range of petty bourgeois, as well as urbanised and migrant working-class residents at both local and national level. From 1944 to 1950, the CP held the majority on the LAB. In 1948, for example, as many as five out of the six elected Board members were returned on a communist ticket. Proceedings within the LVA were also dominated by CP forces during this time.[92] Interestingly, a number of progressive Christians found themselves comfortably at the forefront of this alliance, with Johnson Ngwevela and William Ndunyane especially providing a leading presence.

By 1942, Citashe and his allies had been ousted from their position on the Vigilance Committee by this alliance of ANC and CP forces. The conservatives were further alienated when these progressive forces consolidated their position by forming the Western Province Joint Vigilance Association (WPJVA) in August 1943, in which prominent communist members of the LVA and

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[90]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 162-165.

[91]The role played by Moses Kotane, who occupied key positions in both the local ANC and CP branches, was critical to the forging of this alliance. See Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", pp. 164, 169.

[92]AWC 3/72 44, Commission of Enquiry, 21 March 1948; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 173; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 196.

LAB took a leading role.[93] To make matters more trying for Citashe and his fellow nominated Board members, Gcilishe and Nongauza, they even became ignored for LAB representation from 1942 as the CC preferred to appoint compliant individuals from the barracks as council members to confirm support for their municipalisation policies. Thus in 1942, they were replaced by McDonald Makeleni, Blackshaw Nkwentsha and Joseph Febana, who made up part of a small minority of "bachelors" who, unlike former council nominees, believed that the proposed municipal manufacture and supply of beer and meals would best cater for the needs of "bachelors", who were previously denied ready access to such provisions.[94] This left conservative Christian elements out in the cold with little room to manoeuvre in local civic affairs.

In a desperate attempt to stem the tide and regain their former stature, Citashe's clique questioned the constitutional legitimacy of the existing Vigilance Committee early in 1944. They accused the committee of a number of irregularities, citing its failure to hold elections for the years 1942 and 1943, and its neglect to provide annual reports and financial statements. Later, when under pressure from conservatives, the committee did hold elections for 1944, it was denounced for having the vote controlled by rallying "Bishop Limba's sect" to secure *en bloc* re-election.[95] Apart from the accusation of rigging its own re-election, Citashe went further to criticise the LVC on behalf of black conservatives, for going beyond its boundaries by participating in the formation and activities of the WPJVA without the mandate of the residents.

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[93]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 166, 169.

[94]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/9, minutes of the NAC, 19 December 1941; Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, interview with Ndunyana, 18 March 1942; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/10, LAB minutes, 14 April 1942 and 15 August 1943 (annexure to NAC minutes). At the same time, the CC replaced the liberal Christian Mears, as the Advisory Board Chairman with the highly conservative councillor, Fort. Mears had proved to be a "thorn in the flesh" in opposing the Council's municipalisation plans. The CC believed that Fort would be able to direct Board members to accept the proposals.

[95]Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 15 March 1944; AWC 3/72 44, Citashe to Rogers, 18 February 1944.

Along with the Ministers' Association, Citashe further condemned the LVC's "anti-tribalism" for not allowing the Mfengu the opportunity to celebrate Mfengu Day in peace, and thereby contributing to the divisions amongst residents in Langa. In his final accusation, Citashe claimed that the appointment of LAB elected members for 1944 had been irregular in that the LVC had failed to organise a public election. He claimed that the LVC, without the knowledge and consent of the residents, had gone cunningly behind the people's backs and handed in the names of the sitting members to make sure that they were returned unopposed.[96]

These allegations provoked a storm of argument and served to galvanise the communist-dominated Vigilance Committee, which met the accusations with equal disdain. In many ways, the ensuing quarrel proved to be a great deal of "hot air" with much of the conservative argument appearing suspect. In this atmosphere of wanton obstructionism, Citashe's clique lost further support and legitimacy as the hand of the progressive alliance was strengthened. Elected CP members on the Advisory Board used the situation to denigrate the weak responses of the Christian conservatives. One of the returned members, Petu, for example, took advantage of the conservatives' attack to launch a full-scale counter diatribe against Citashe. Having disputed the allegations by stating that he enjoyed the complete support of the married quarters' residents who had returned him unopposed in December 1943, Petu accused Citashe for not making his objections timeously and for not offering opposing candidates at the time. Petu even wrote to the President of the Ethiopian Church of South Africa, slating the "most ill-disciplined derision and abuse" from Citashe delivered in public. Although he did not oppose Citashe's involvement in politics, he argued that Citashe's foremost concerns should be the spiritual aspects of his congregation. Petu suggested that Citashe "so busied himself in politics that he [could not] do

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[96]Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 15 March 1944 and 9 March 1944; AWC 3/72 44,

justice either to his spiritual and religious or political work". Fearing repercussions for the local Ethiopian Church, Petu went so far as to request the President to take action against Citashe, especially in view of the fact that certain of his congregational members allegedly supported the returned Board members and Vigilance Committee.[97]

Despite the growing shift in opinion, Citashe and his colleagues persisted with their intentions of ousting the existing Vigilance Committee. Basing their political opposition on strongly-worded, anti-communist propaganda, they targeted the churches for sympathetic support and co-ordinated a campaign to mobilise staunch church adherents.[98] By February 1944, Citashe and the disgruntled conservatives were in a position to establish their own splinter Vigilance Association, with their support base stemming largely from leading respectable and *oozenzele* conservative church members. Citashe chaired the new organisation, which became known patronisingly by its opponents as the "sweetheart" Vigilance Association. Its committee members included the ministers, Ndaliso and Xibenye, and conservative Christians such as A. Xhello, R. Kula, C.J. Nabe, J.Z. Fuku, G. Nongauza, J. Papu, H. Gcilishe, G. Fessi, E. Mlambo and W. Somana. Most of these members, like Citashe, saw Christ's teachings as the basis for world peace and the foundation of democratic governments. They followed the more conventional forms of Christianity and hoped for the establishment of a fully-fledged, anti-communist, Christian government throughout the world. The motto of the new association was enshrined in the word "Progress", as it committed itself to self-help strategies and the forward movement of the people. The new Vigilance Committee promoted itself as a "non-political" body with no party policy,

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Citashe to Rogers, 18 February 1944; ibid., Langa Vigilance Association to Manager of Native Administration, Langa, 9 March 1944.

[97]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, Petu to the President of the Ethiopian Church of South Africa, 10 May 1944.

[98]AWC 3/72 44, Citashe to Rogers, 18 February 1944; Guardian, 28 December 1944.

though it did have leanings towards conservative elements within the ANC and All African Convention. It also sought to co-operate closely with all local and national authorities, which was considered to be central to the fulfilment of its purely civic duties.[99]

The emergence of the new splinter Vigilance Association further divided conservatives from their progressive counterparts, with the consequence of splitting Langa into two main opposing camps even reflected in the growing tensions within the churches. In order to re-assert its legitimacy and to regain representation on the Advisory Board, Citashe's group fought a hotly-contested Board election in 1944. The new splinter committee based its campaign on a distinctly Christian anti-communist agenda and received the overt support of Superintendent Rogers. Citashe's coterie was even alleged to have afforded prospective voters the opportunity of obtaining work permits, which Rogers evidently favoured granting the supporters of Citashe, unlike the lack of co-operation he showed to the communist-dominated group, headed by Bell Ntshinga.[100] Citashe's clique lost the election by 900 votes to 588 and, in so doing, failed to gain a single representative on the Board.[101] From this point onwards, the intensity of Christian conservative opposition declined as conservatives came to accept their effective marginalisation. Although some of Citashe's clique persisted in attempting to gain a hearing on the Advisory Board, purportedly on the basis of being the "intelligent and responsible" section of the local population, and despite their constant calls for communist board members to resign their positions because of their political agendas,[102] they were able to make little impact on civic affairs for the rest of the 1940s.

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[99]Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 15 March 1944; AWC 3/72 44, Citashe to Rogers, 18 February 1944; ibid., 1944 list of Citashe's Langa Vigilance Committee; ibid., Commission of Enquiry, 21 March 1948.

[100]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, interview with Ndunyana, 1 March 1945.

[101]Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", pp. 173, 174.

[102]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/10, LAB minutes, 20 March 1944 and 8 August 1944 (annexure to NAC minutes).

Already by 1945, Citashe had stepped down as Chairman of the splinter Vigilance Association and appeared rather to have diverted most of his efforts towards financing the construction of the Ethiopian Church building in Langa. By February 1948, deeply disillusioned, Citashe would in fact depart from Langa for Bloemfontein, after seventeen years of ministry and community activity in the township.[103]

With the demise of the conservative opposition, the more progressive elements were encouraged to assume overwhelming control of the LAB, LVA and broader political affairs from around the mid-1940s onwards. To this end, the role of progressive Christians proved to be vital in subsequent responses of the emergent United Front bloc. In particular, Johnson N. Ngwevela, William Ndunyane, Julius Malangabi and Bell Ntshinga were highly influential in shaping the dominant character of progressive action. Ngwevela combined his leadership within the local ANC (WP) and CP branches, and on the LVA and LAB as an elected member, with his respective positions of preacher, treasurer and secretary in the Methodist Church, his Grand Vigilance Secretaryship of the African Western Grand Temple, his position of Grand Superintendent of the Usizo Lwa Bantu Temple and Secretaryship of the local Independent Order of True Templars.[104] Ndunyane combined his leadership within the CP and on the LVA and LAB as an elected member with his church membership.[105] Julius Malangabi was an important ANC (WP) and JC leader, together with being a prominent Anglican preacher.[106] Finally, Ntshinga, too,

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[103]Molteno Papers, BC 579, document A.24.1195.

[104]Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", pp. 164, 174, 175.

[105]Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 152; Kinkhead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 147.

[106]Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 164; SAL, Ixilongo, no. 8, February 1927, p. 5; Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker notes, January 1942; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 155.

combined his leadership on the local CP and Vigilance Association with his church membership.[107] These Christians were powerfully informed by the more progressive tenets of Christian liberalism, albeit that they were stronger on liberalism rather than the Christian religion.

They tended to be associated with the mission churches and with white liberal clergy, such as Savage, Bull and Lavis, who themselves had become increasingly influenced by progressive views in the 1940s – compared to their conservatism in the 1920s – as they fostered relations with organisations within the United Front through their involvement in the JC. Many of these churchmen had been early members of the JC, who, unlike conservative black Christian JC members, welcomed the opportunity of establishing a range of relationships through their JC experience with other Christian liberal, as well as communist-orientated organisations. In this regard, they formed relations with white liberals such as D. Buchanan, W.G. Mears, D.B. Molteno and W.G. Ballinger, as well as with white communists such as Bunting and Simons. In contrast to the black Christian conservatives, who had developed a narrow Christian philosophy of society and as such feared liaisons with communists, they followed a more flexible understanding of the relationship between religion and society. By following the views of progressive white clergy and white liberals, and considering their close connections with local branches of the CP and the progressive ANC, they found it natural to develop associations with a variety of organisations which offered more radical forms of resistance in an increasingly tough socio-political climate. As such, they even came to provide the leadership of the Langa branch of the CP, in spite of the "atheistic" doctrines associated with communism.

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[107]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 175; AWC 3/53 185, untitled document, 1 October 1945.

So far as their formative involvement in the local civic organisations was concerned, the communist-elected and progressive Christian AB members brought a critical confrontational edge to the LAB and LVA, especially from 1944 onwards. Drawing from a growing body of Christian liberal, communist and ANC criticism, local Christian leaders such as Ngwevela, Ndunyane and Ntshinga began to issue radical statements through the LAB and LVA against pass laws, influx controls and local regulations, which revealed incisive analysis into the local and national causes and effects of such legislation. Rather than simply focus on issues in a separate and individualistic fashion, they were increasingly able to expose the oppressive nature of the workings of the entire municipal machine and the broader policy of national segregation. To this end, they successfully linked local issues of unjust economic rentals, railway fares, influx controls, police raids, the arbitrary powers of the Superintendent and township authorities, the imposition of municipal beerhalls, kitchens and trading, and unhealthy living conditions in the barracks and special quarters, to broader patterns of municipal and governmental subjugation.[108] Although these protestations were hardly ever based on a substantial body of Christian scholarship, they were based on universalist values of mission ideology and did reveal a broad Christian commitment. Many appeals were in fact heavily coloured by Christian symbolism as local and central authorities were urged to live up to their claims of being a "Christian" government. In 1945, for example, at a mass meeting convened by Ntshinga's Vigilance Committee and the CP in opposition to the proposed introduction of more strictly-defined Native Registration Regulations, the CC was called upon to "resist the application of these savage, unjust, undemocratic and unchristian laws to our people".[109] In the same vein, communist and progressive Christian Board members used general Christian terminology to resist the proposed physical examinations in 1950

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[108]See, for example, 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/11, LAB minutes, 15 May 1945 (annexure to NAC minutes); ibid., minutes of the NAC, 8 October 1945; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/12, minutes of the NAC, 23 September 1946; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 101.

[109]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 175.

whereby measurements and scars would be recorded from Africans for identification purposes to avoid impersonation. These Board members feared that individuals would be mishandled and argued that "the practice [was] contrary to Christian ideologies and degraded [man's] dignity".[110] In his capacity as an AB member, Ndunyane was also not below calling Rogers back to decent Christian standards, after having labelled him a "heathen" on account of the arbitrary powers he exercised.[111]

Despite the new edge brought to local civic debate, by the late 1940s involvement in the affairs of the Board had shown little return. As a result, communist and progressive Christian members led intermittent adjournments of the Board in the years 1947 to 1950, in protest against the Council's consistent failure to respond to as many as thirty-one motions instituted as far back as 1943. In a well-constructed and penetrating memorandum, they condemned the CC, called for the abolition of the NAC and especially took the collaborating council nominees to task.[112] From 1945, conservative Christians from the married quarters, such as Garcia Nongauza, J. Msutu and J.P. Mondliwa, had again been appointed as council nominees after the failure of favoured appointees from the barracks to contribute to the Council's plans for the municipalisation of beer and trading activities. They had sought to obstruct the work of the elected members, with Nongauza, especially, refusing repeatedly to identify with their protests on the basis that – in his words – "they were the views of communists".[113] Significantly, Ndunyane and Ngwevela criticised the

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[110] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/15, LAB minutes, 18 April 1950 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[111] AWC 3/53 185, Native Affairs Committee document, 1 October 1945; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 101.

[112] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/12, LAB minutes, 10 February 1947 (annexure to NAC minutes); 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/14, minutes of the NAC, 10 June 1949; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/15, minutes of the NAC, 15 February 1951.

[113] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/11, minutes of the NAC, 4 December 1945; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/12, minutes of the NAC,

council nominees for pursuing the unequal and separatist Christian philosophy of the late Dr. Aggrey (and by implication that of Booker T. Washington). This indicated a distinct shift on the part of local progressive Christians, who rather based their opposition on mission universalism, immediate democratic and equal rights, and anti-segregationism.[114]

As part of their mission tradition of faith in human equality and the possibility of ethnic conciliation, an important role of progressive Christians on the LAB and LVA in the 1940s was to promote inter-racial and inter-organisational co-operation as a contribution to the formation of a broadly-aligned dissenting voice. From 1944, they were able to transform the official civic bodies into allies of both local and national political, cultural and labour organisations. Given their close liaisons with white liberals and progressive white mission churchgoers, and their ANC, JC and CP links, they were influential in bringing the communist-dominated LAB and the established LVA together with the WPJA, the ANC (WP), the CP, JC and SAIRR, as well as with a range of white liberal and church groups, to become part of a loosely-aligned, inter-racial oppositional alliance, increasingly known as the powerful United Front. This was particularly evident in the part played by Ndunyane, Malangabi, Ngwevela and Ntshinga in forming a local United Anti-Pass Committee in 1944 which included members from the LAB, LVA, WPJVA, ANC (WP), CP and JC. In this way, black progressive Christians from Langa, together with their white Christian counterparts such as Mears, Lavis and Savage, emerged at the forefront of these united bodies to shape their character of protest.[115]

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23 September 1946 and 8 October 1946; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/14, minutes of the NAC, 10 December 1948.

[114]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/15, minutes of the NAC, 15 February 1951.

[115]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 172; Cape Argus, 22 October 1945.

Much of the work of the ANC, CP and broader United Front in the western Cape from the mid-1940s revolved around opposition to pass laws and the Council's municipalisation policies, in which progressive Christians provided an important lead. In the context of newly-proposed legislation to establish the formal introduction of the pass system in the Cape and with the CC intent on securing the municipalisation of beer and trade in Langa, more radical forms of resistance were required, which was in part inspired and delivered by progressive Social Christians. Drawing at one level from communist influences which sensitised this petty bourgeois leadership to the needs of the working-class and migrant elements, but also being informed by mission universalism, Christ-like sacrificialism and new innovations in African theology in the 1940s which provided a more democratic basis for African nationalism, progressive Christians came to identify more closely with the grievances of "bachelor" workers of the barracks and special quarters. In particular, those progressive Christians with ANC links, such as Ngwevela and Malangabi, came to identify with the overtly Christian stance of Congress leader Albert Luthuli, who on the basis of conventional understandings of Christian self-sacrifice, shifted from constitutional protest to open defiance of unjust laws in a determined, but non-violent manner. In addition, it would appear that some of the younger ANC local members were inspired by the new religious ideology of African nationalism that was being articulated by ANC leaders such as the Youth League President, Anton Lembede, in the mid-1940s. Such an ideology involved an interweaving of Christian and African religious resources to link traditions in a new spirit of unity, and so provide a basis for a new holistic and unified African nation. Under these influences, progressive Christians in Langa thus began to mobilise popular support, not only from the married and more permanent residents, but also from the temporary "bachelor" workers as they intensified the resistance campaign. These more popularly-orientated theological convictions – both conventional and more innovative - required new strategies and tactics to ensure the mobilisation of general support, which involved a shift from formal protest to mass

demonstrations, boycotts, strikes and civil disobedience against discriminatory laws. Along these lines, local progressive Christians proved instrumental in securing the employment of such techniques in the increasingly confrontational protests of the United Front in Langa and broader Cape Town in the 1940s.

From early 1944, as the Council went ahead with its Native Registration Scheme and established a reception depot in Langa to enforce the pass system more strictly, and with the consequent emergence of the United Anti-Pass Committee, black progressive Christians in the United Front rallied to the formation of local anti-pass committees and actively participated in mustering widespread support for the anti-pass campaigns of March and August 1944. They identified Sundays as appropriate times at which to collect signatures from church and non-churchgoers for the anti-pass petition. On the basis of such groundwork, the anti-pass demonstrations in 1944 drew large crowds in Langa with widespread opposition from civic and welfare associations, political bodies, trade unions, religious groups and even sporting organisations.[116] Similarly, Ntshinga and Ndunyane won the confidence of "bachelor" workers in Langa in May 1944, when they led an effective boycott of the Council's Kitchen along with other progressive elements, after Rogers had prevented barracks' men from cooking their own food and removed their wood-collecting privileges, in order to force them to utilise the Council's eating facility. Their persuasive boycott approach and successful articulation of "bachelor" grievances eventually forced Rogers to reinstate the wood-cutting privileges.[117]

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[116]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 172, 175; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", pp. 176,179, 180, 182.

[117]Molteno Papers, BC 579, Molteno to Rogers, 2 May 1944; ibid., Rogers to Molteno, 4 May 1944. Interestingly, Citashe's Vigilance Association had sought to gain advantage over the Ntshinga group in this affair by using Rogers to allow them to announce the reinstatement of wood-cutting privileges when it was clear that the boycott had proved effective. Rogers "cordially granted" this request, following which Citashe, in one of his few direct communications with them, proudly made the lifting of the ban known to the residents of the main barracks at a specially-called meeting. His announcement, however, failed to elicit

When, in 1945, further repressive Native Registration Regulations were proposed, framed under the Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, with further plans to decentralise the control of pass registration to local authorities and to formalise the pass law system in the Cape as elsewhere throughout the Union, black Social Christians within the United Front were again remarkably active in the grassroots mobilisation of local opposition. As a result, the broadly-aligned, mass-based, anti-pass protest planned for June 1945 proved highly successful in attracting five thousand demonstrators – mostly black and from across the class divide – to the Grand Parade in Cape Town and for a subsequent march to parliament. Ndunyane was especially prominent in drumming up support at preliminary meetings in Langa prior to the mass demonstration, as he took the podium alongside the CP and ANC leader, Kotane, as well as the Native Representatives, Molteno and Ballinger.[118] Along with Ntshinga, Ndunyane was equally conspicuous in the well-received anti-pass mass meetings held in Langa in September and October 1945, which were addressed by members of the LVA, LAB, CP and ANC, in a heated context where legislation had recently been drafted to subject even women and children to passes. As an indication of the growing radicalism and religious militancy of some progressive Christians, Ndunyane advocated a single day stay-at-home strike in opposition to the proposed pass laws and in the process was reported to have said the following:

> If I were to die on a strike for this ill-treatment I would thank God. Go forward Africans; freedom is obtained by bloodshed. Let us resist this at the beginning.[119]

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the confidence that was intended. On behalf of the overwhelming majority of main barracks' residents, Samuel Binqela condemned Citashe and his "lost pagans" for "hypocritically calling [their] meeting of lunatic and fallacious" proportions. He warned them to "terminate their abominably teasing intrusion" and rather gave full support to Ntshinga's Vigilance Association for leading the highly successful boycott to force the hand of the authorities. See Molteno Papers, BC 579, Rogers to Molteno, 10 May 1944; ibid., letter from Samuel Binqela, 8 May 1944.

[118]Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 183; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 172.

[119]AWC 3/53 185, Native Affairs Committee document, 1 October 1945; Musemwa, "Aspects of the

Partly due to such agitation from Social Christians like Ndunyane, a day of national work stoppage and mass action was eventually planned by the National Anti-Pass Committee for 4 August 1946, at which time demonstrators were expected to burn their passes. Again, Ndunyane, Ngwevela and Ntshinga, amongst others, were instrumental in doing the groundwork for the Langa demonstration. On the prescribed day, some seven thousand residents, broadly representative of the community, attended the Langa protest meeting with many actively engaging in the burning of passes.[120] Only staunchly conservative Christians, self-described as the "responsible" section of the community, stayed out of the campaign and evidently treated the affair as a "big joke".[121]

The growing militant and religious nationalism of Ndunyane and other progressive Christians was further apparent in fiery meetings held in March 1947 in opposition to the Council's manoeuvres and attempts once again to municipalise the sale of beer and other trading activities. It appears that Rogers had stirred up the situation by holding a rare meeting with the "single" men at the barracks to convince them to support the Council's drive for a municipal beerhall, promoting its advantages for "bachelor" workers, and even intimating that certain restrictions on Africans would be lifted if the plan was endorsed. Ndunyane, in particular, responded with fury and passion to the Superintendent's guile. He had become accustomed to the style of Rogers as early as 1941, when in similar circumstances, the Superintendent had called an official meeting at the main barracks (in that case during church time on a Sunday when the respectable leadership was

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Social and Political History of Langa", p. 185.

[120]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 180; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 187.

[121]AWC 3/53 185, Native Affairs Committee document, July 1946.

known to be safely involved in religious communion), again to lobby for the backing of "bachelor" workers for the municipal beerhall. On that occasion, Ndunyane had, in fact, been called out of church to witness Rogers in action.[122] This time, Ndunyane led an intensely fervent and even frenzied meeting of protest at the main barracks, which generated enthusiastic "bachelor" worker support. Not unaccustomed to labelling Rogers a pagan, Ndunyane went on a tirade about the Superintendent's deception. As the discontent of the crowd subsequently grew, they became enraged to the point that the meeting broke up in disorder. Windows of the municipal kitchen at the barracks were subsequently smashed. In addition, the wooden structure of the kitchen and dining hall at the "luxury flats" was demolished and the local offices of the Native Recruiting Corporation were vandalised. It was clear that the dreaded pass system and the Council's policy of municipalisation were the main objects of the demonstrators' hostility, something which had been fanned by the growing indignation of progressive Christians like Ndunyane. Along with Social Christians such as Lwana and Rev. A. Fassie, Ndunyane himself was later arrested for inciting the barrack men.[123] This "beerhall riot of 1947" – as it was known by the township authorities – perhaps saw the height of progressive Christian influence in the 1940s in the intensification and radicalisation of local resistance, which would be carried through into the 1950s.

Despite the seminal role of black Christians in the growing identification with the grievances of a range of social groups within the Langa community, and with the gradual conversion to more confrontational tactics of protest, their presence in the United Front at the same time ensured that

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[122]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker notes, October 1941.

[123]Torch, 17 March 1947; AWC 3/23 201, Disturbances at Langa document, 9 March 1947; Kinkeac-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 185; Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 120.

the process of radicalisation did not run too far. Although contributing to a broadly-aligned, inter-racial voice of dissent, it could also be argued that the local progressive Christian leadership blocked a more militant response from developing. For the most part, they promoted a resistance policy that, although more direct and confrontational, was still couched within the confines of Christian non-violence, reformism and inter-racial co-operation, whatever the growing militancy of their constituents. They were even ambivalent amongst themselves about the form that direct action should take, with many Christians within the United Front following more conventional forms of Christian protest and preferring a constitutional course of action, so that many appeals within this bloc continued to be based on broad reformist Christian lines. Naturally, some of the petty bourgeois Christian leaders within this bloc feared that they would lose control of the nationalist movement to so-called "rowdy" working-class elements, and thus preferred moderate forms of mobilisation. Others were unconcerned about the need for a cross-class alliance between petty bourgeois residents and temporary migrant workers. Even Ntshinga in the early 1940s, as an LVA member before his growing communist commitment, decided not to speak at "bachelor" meetings on the basis that – in his words – "the people didn't go to church and that's why they talked nonsense".[124]

The very fact that the black progressive Christian leadership maintained their close associations with white liberals, worked towards racial reconciliation and made certain that the ANC and CP retained close links with the range of white liberal and church groups as part of the broad, democratic, inter-racial and liberally-minded United Front, also effectively stifled the growth of militancy. With white Christian liberals such as Mears and Lavis represented on the United Anti-Pass Committee together with black Christian progressives, for example, it was abundantly clear

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[124]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker notes, 3 December 1941.

that the campaign could only be directed along multi-racial and conciliatory lines of action. Furthermore, given that Malangabi, Ngwevela and Ntshinga continued to co-operate closely with the Native Representatives, such as the increasingly moderate Molteno and Ballinger throughout the 1940s, and still supported white candidates for the Native Representatives' elections as late as 1948 – despite decisions taken by the national ANC and CP Executives to boycott "dummy" institutions – underlined their tentative political attitudes.[125] Even the way in which black Christian leadership infused the anti-pass laws campaign with a tenor of religious enthusiasm served not only to inspire and unite the demonstrators, but also to direct their political responses along peaceable lines. The days of prayer and fasting, for example, organised to promote solidarity amongst the protestors, were also used to uphold Christian ethics of love and peace, which powerfully informed the later campaigns of non-violent resistance. Ntshinga and Ngwevela also made certain that LVA meetings reflected this peaceful, religious atmosphere. As at the anti-pass gatherings, LVA meetings opened and closed in Christian prayer, and hymns of brotherhood and Christian harmony were sung to promote both co-operation and the ideals of non-violence and peace. Generally, militancy was still frowned upon by the majority of the petty bourgeois Christian leadership. It was still not uncommon, in cases of controversy being displayed at LVA meetings, for it to be settled in the form of an unpopular speaker being drowned out by the singing of a hymn![126]

It is important to emphasise, therefore, that much of the politicisation partially inspired by progressive Christians, remained patchy in the 1940s. A number of the Social Christian leaders were still fraught with ambiguities in their socio-political approach. Malangabi, especially,

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[125]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 193, 195; Torch, 12 January 1948, 23 February 1948, 23 August 1948 and 8 November 1948.

[126]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker notes, 26 March 1940.

wavered between a more progressive, anti-segregationist stance and more conventional, conservative and unequal forms of Christian response. Ngwevela, too, fluctuated between his strict teetotalism, his support for traditional chiefs and his more radical calls for integration and immediate equality of rights. Some of the Christian leadership, like Ntshinga, also appear to have joined the CP and ANC (WP) initially more on the basis of political expediency and personal ambition, than on close identification with the parties' political programme and ideology. Ntshinga seems to have used his CP membership as an opportunity to extend his patronage and clientele networks within the Langa community, which effectively limited his political responses as a communist leader. At the same time, the fact that other Social Christian leaders were not so much supported for their progressive CP and ANC affiliation as much as for being respected individuals with a larger patronage constituency, also meant that their political views were not strictly shaped by communist or Congress ideology. This was true of Ngwevela, for example, who received backing largely because residents appreciated his contributions to a wide variety of aspects of local community life in Langa. These included his religious leadership of temperance bodies and prominence in the Methodist Church, being a founding father of the Red Cross First Aid in Langa and a long-serving civic and welfare organiser.[127] Ntshinga, too, was able to command Church of Christ *en bloc* support not so much based on his CP membership, as the previous patronage shown to him as a relatively conservative VC candidate, who was prepared to grant favours by duly electing Church of Christ members to the Vigilance Committee. Consequently, Christian leaders were not placed under the ideological grip of a radical pressure group and constituency. Rather, in the case of Ntshinga, the nature of his Church of Christ support base – relatively conservative, moderate and intensely "religious" – would to some extent restrict some of his later political actions.[128]

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[127]Musemwa, "Aspects of the Social and Political History of Langa", p. 175.

[128]Molteno Papers, BC 579, Citashe to Molteno, 15 March 1944; ibid., LVA document, 1941; Simons

With various Christian influences to some degree limiting the political responses of the United Front, small groups of "non-collaborationists" emerged in Cape Town in reaction to the perceived restrictions of the Social Gospel ideology. Towards the end of 1943, these separate entities united under the umbrella of the NEUM under the leadership of a radical middle-class intelligentsia. It has been mentioned that the movement strongly resented Christian trusteeship and "sham" representation, and instead advocated the boycott of "dummy" institutions. Its forceful rhetoric was especially directed against conservative Christians and the more cautious Christian wing of the United Front which continued to pursue constitutional channels of communication, like the Native Representatives' and Advisory Board systems. The movement was particularly ruthless in its exposure of "stooges" and "quislings" with individual conservative, as well as progressive, Christians mainly being identified for their collaborationist roles. Langa ministers, when occasionally engaging in socio-political activities, were not immune from attack by being censured for their liberal and trusteeship leanings.[129] The inter-racial, co-operative and conciliatory nature of the United Front was also fiercely opposed, especially in terms of its liaisons with white liberal associations and church groups, which, being perceived as organs of Christian trusteeship, were considered as damaging to the resistance struggle.

By 1945, the movement had become active in Langa. With its anti-Christian liberal ideology, the local NEUM branch was able to attract radical Langa youth, who were increasingly anti-church. It provided an important political platform for them and became increasingly influential in politicising and radicalising the youth of Langa. For the latter part of the 1940s, local Unity

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Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker notes, 12 March 1940; AWC 3/72 44, Lwana to Rogers, 8 February 1945; ibid., Citashe to Rogers, 18 February 1944.

129 Torch, 29 December 1949.

Movement members focused their political campaign on bringing about the demise of the Native Representatives' System. They began by calling for the resignation of the Native Representatives, before actively disrupting United Front meetings at which Molteno as the Native Representative was present on the podium. As a result, from 1946 to 1948, Molteno virtually failed to gain a hearing amongst Africans in Langa. Even his more fervent supporters such as Malangabi and Ntshinga feared the repercussions of calling a meeting for Molteno. For these reasons, he was eventually forced to stand down for re-election as the Native Representative in 1948.[130] Other Native Representative candidates for the 1948 elections were also vigorously opposed and had their meetings disrupted.[131] In this way, the NEUM proved reasonably successful in combating Christian liberal reformism and in weakening the hold of the United Front to some degree. However, its support base in Langa stayed comparatively small, so that its efficacy was rather reflected in terms of its comprehensive analytical claims and ideological rhetoric.

3.3 The decline of Christian liberal influences in local politics

As Christian liberal persuasions continued to dominate the political responses of the still effectual United Front in the early 1950s, along with more conventional Christian appeals still shaping the socio-political approach of black conservatives, the political antagonism from anti-Christian liberal "non-collaborationist" groupings grew in momentum. As racially discriminatory policies became further defined and developed within statutory law with the rise to power of the NP in 1948, and as the local effects of the increasingly harsh implementation of apartheid regional policy began to be experienced in the 1950s, more radical strategies of ideological struggle

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[130] Torch, 1 September 1947, 8 September 1947, 1 December 1947, 23 March 1948 and 15 March 1948.

[131] Torch, 23 August 1948 and 8 November 1948.

became pressing. This intensified approach emerged in opposition to the continued caution inherent within the liberal and religious-based tactics of the United Front in the 1950s, through the non-collaborationist responses of the ultra-left, Trotskyist NEUM, as well as from anti-church Africanist elements in the ranks of the United Front itself. In particular, inspired by an emphatic rejection of white Christian liberalism and an inherently more African theology, potent Africanist responses proved decisive in mobilising semi-urbanised and migrant working-class elements. This, in turn, served to weaken the ascendancy of local progressive Christians in community politics and to effect the decline of Christian liberal influences by the end of the 1950s. In these ways, then, religion in its Africanist, Christian liberal and fundamentalist forms continued to be an influential force, resource and sounding board in framing the intellectual character of local political dynamics in the 1950s.

As discriminatory NP legislation hardened in the local context during the 1950s, local churches once again remained remarkably quiescent in the nature of their direct institutional responses. Most black clergy, therefore, continued to support white church initiatives of protest, remaining subordinate to white-dominated Christian organisational opposition, whereby merely broad resolutions were brought to the attention of authorities, followed by few processes of real action. In this way, local black clergy supported a range of broad synodical and white-dominated ecumenical condemnations of apartheid, its racial injustices and "evil" laws throughout the 1950s, that nevertheless offered few plans for consequential action.[132] They also added their voice to generalised appeals from white-controlled ecclesiastical organisations in relation to local issues such as pass laws and forcible removals. They engaged in days of prayer organised by the CPCC for the improvement of race relations and the extension of the Kingdom in a multi-racial South Africa. On such occasions, together with white organisers, they were at pains to make sure that

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[132]See, for example, Torch, 29 December 1949 and 5 December 1950.

the event did not remotely come to resemble a political meeting.[133] As a clear indication of their subordination and dependence, many local clergy even participated in the CPCC's decision to take an active role in the Van Riebeeck Tercentenary Celebrations of 1952.[134] In this regard, Rev. Mbete, who was closely connected with the Festival Committee, would suffer a general walkout in protest against his role in the attempts to break the boycott of the events, when trying to preach in the Methodist Church.[135] Local clergy also submitted their approval of focused statements that frequently tended to be based on the narrow self-interests of the churches themselves, rather than on the broad interests of Africans in general. For example, their support for the narrow CPCC protest against the Native Laws Amendment Bill of 1957 provided a case in point. The Bill was essentially designed to prohibit gatherings of Africans outside locations, whether for church, economic or political purposes. In response, with the backing of Langa ministers, the CPCC was simply concerned about issues of religious segregation that the Bill seemed to imply and based its opposition on the rights of individuals to assemble together for worship, rather than on the rights to general freedom of assembly, which formed the basis of other organisational protests such as that of the ANC.[136]

With most Langa clergy subordinating their formal protests to white church initiatives, local corporate religious responses remained limited throughout the 1950s. By this time, the majority of ministers from the mission, Pentecostal and independent churches actually avoided making political statements, and rather resigned themselves to the exercise of their spiritual duties for fear

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[133]BC 878, Cape Peninsula Church Council minutes, 20 April 1951 and 15 April 1955.

[134]BC 878, Cape Peninsula Church Council minutes, 10 August 1951, p. 258.

[135]Torch, 18 March 1952.

[136]BC 878, Cape Peninsula Church Council minutes, 17 April 1957; Torch, 26 March 1957.

of provoking radical criticism in an increasingly politicised township environment. In this way, the patron-client networks inherent within local politics in the 1920s and 1930s, on which numerous reverends had relied for their dominant socio-political position, had clearly failed to survive the radicalisation of community politics in the 1940s. Although numerous clergy were apt to indulge in political diatribes against the NP's apartheid programme in private, they failed to translate their objections into church resolutions and action, and generally adopted a defeatist attitude. In addition, their continued commitments to the religious and political philosophy of Washington and Aggrey, and to long term Christian integrationist ideals within a partially segregationist framework, certainly checked a strong religious voice of local institutional dissent from developing. The political attitudes of Reverends Louw of the Assemblies of God, Maya of the EC of SA, Tshabangu of the Presbyterian Church of Africa and Lediga of the PC, interviewed in the mid-1950s, provide useful examples to clarify these points.

Although deploring the evils of apartheid and ethnic zoning, Rev. Louw preferred to promulgate the virtues of gentleness and submission. He had resigned himself to the present circumstances and preferred to "turn the other cheek". He argued that his people could not afford to entertain aims of their freedom and, in despair, went so far as to affirm that "if they tell me to live on top of Table Mountain; that is alright". In resigned support of apartheid, he later suggested that perhaps segregation was the best route for the time being, considering the black man's reliance on whites.[137] Similar sentiments were echoed by Rev. Lediga. Although generally denouncing apartheid and its laws with a special abhorrence of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, he nevertheless believed that Africans should concentrate on bettering themselves before demanding concessions. For this reason, he argued that apartheid was not altogether without justification and

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[137]Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Louw, 1955; ibid., box 21, interview with Rev. Louw, 1956.

supported segregation in some ways.[138] Although bitterly critical of the Nationalist Government in private, Rev. Maya, too, at the same time disclaimed any interest in politics and rather adopted deferential attitudes towards the governments of both South Africa and Great Britain.[139] Again, although enraged about the NP's denial of African rights "for those who [had] advanced" and sarcastic about the "sham democracy" of the Native Representatives' system, Rev. Tshabangu preferred ultimately to respond passively by relying on God's grace, rather than promote personal and communal responsibility and resistance. It was his view that "if the Africans persevered and showed forbearance, God would come to their aid and find a solution". Thus, as a close follower of Aggrey as late as the 1950s, he still accepted the assumption that most Africans remained "uncivilised heathens" and should therefore utilise what few concessions remained to strive for "equal rights for all civilised men".[140] Self-styled "Bishop" Fassie of the African Baptist Ethiopian Church was one of the few exceptions, who utilised his church as a platform for government opposition. He made use of the pulpit to address the stringent living conditions of local township life, with his sermons being uncharacteristically innovative as he intermingled religious idiom with political condemnations and social briefing. His sermons included explanations and criticisms of local and central government regulations regarding issues of labour, compensatory rights and the franchise. Yet, again, his responses were conditioned by his partial approval of apartheid as a means of securing African independence, which corresponded with the distinctly black nationalistic outlook of his church.[141] For most local clergy, though, conventionally conservative religious and political viewpoints predominated into the 1950s, so that it becomes easy to see

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[138] Torch, 29 December 1949; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Lediga, 1955.

[139] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Maya, 1955.

[140] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, interview with Rev. Tshabangu, 1955. The Reverends Teka and Makamayi were also very keen supporters of Aggrey.

[141] Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 6, interview with Rev. Fassie, 10 January 1956.

why Rogers in 1952 was able to report to the Native Commissioner at Salt River that "the Native Ministers and Evangelists in this area have not actively supported the resistance movement".[142]

In addition, there was the fact that by the 1950s, a number of leading respectable clergy, such as Reverends Wesinyane, Lediga, Tshabangu and Abraham, remained avid supporters of conservative social organisations in Langa, such as the Moral Rearmament Association (MRA). Ecclesiastical commitments to MRA principles certainly diverted local clergy from challenging the structural oppressions of the developing apartheid state and tended to divert them from political struggle to religious seclusion. Essentially, the MRA was a moral crusade geared towards converting the world to Christianity. It had its roots in the Oxford Group Movement and more conventional forms of Christianity, and had been brought to South Africa by British students in 1928. It was founded on ideals of honesty, purity, love and sincerity, and basically argued that individuals were the underlying cause of ills in society. In order for society to be transformed, a change of heart within individuals was therefore necessary, in line with the four moral ideals, and not a conscious restructuring of the social and political order. In this regard, the MRA viewed the communist agenda of social engineering with disdain and constituted itself as strongly anti-communist.[143] A number of Langa clergy were thoroughly convinced by MRA principles, and confidently espoused these ideas at regular home meetings which included white visitors – even, on occasions, Native Commissioner of the Cape Peninsula, Parsons.[144] Lediga was a particularly

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[142]AWC 3/2 102, Rogers to the Native Commissioner, Salt River, 11 December 1952. Rogers was only aware of Rev. Seboloa of the AME Church and the evangelist J. Gwabeni of the ANMC as, allegedly, being active supporters of the resistance movement.

[143]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, notes by D. Kunene, 8 January 1951; J. S. Blocker, American Temperance Movements: Cycles of Reform, (Boston, Twayne, 1989), p. 139.

[144]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, notes by D. Kunene, 8 January 1951; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 21, interview with Rev. Lediga, 1955.

staunch MRA supporter and would often contend that it was essential first to find fault within oneself before one could be in a position to point an accusing finger at one's ruler or employer. He was adamant that through the awakening of his own moral conscience, he had won many white friendships, whereas before he had viewed whites with suspicion. Other ministers and ultra-conservative Christians were persuaded that, by following MRA principles, they had become less bitter about government actions. By searching themselves, rather than accusing the government, they had discovered that they, to a large extent, were to blame for the position in which they found themselves.[145] Under such continued ideological influences in the 1950s which essentially functioned to maintain the existing status quo by preaching patience, long-suffering and submission to the government, church responses were always going to remain guarded.

Of the few political interventions which were initiated by local ministers and churches, most continued to support primarily religious concerns and the interests of petty bourgeois church membership. Apart from being prominent in the anti-beerhall campaign, the CPIDAMASA, for example, focused its agenda substantially on church-related issues. In some of its rare appeals to the township authorities, the CPIDAMASA was simply concerned about matters such as council rates, and only inasmuch as they applied to the local churches. Thus, in a context of high rents, forcible removals, a dire housing crisis and threatened relocations, the CPIDAMASA in 1957 only saw fit to appeal to Rogers to cancel rates charged against mission houses, which were supposedly causing a heavy drain on church funds. In another uncommon communication in

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[145]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, notes by D. Kunene, 8 January 1951. Notice that MRA supporters came under particularly strong censure from local NEUM members in Langa, who viewed moral rearmament as "the religion of fascism; a creed worthy of quislings in service of the herrenvolk". They believed that MRA principles were aimed at directing workers away from political struggle to religious seclusion. They argued the extreme view that the movement was contrived and organised by industrial bosses, financiers, churches and imperialist military leaders during the Second World War to crush liberation movements towards the reinstallation of imperialist governments. See Torch, 12 October 1954 and 22 February 1961.

1961, the CPIDAMASA was equally concerned solely with extending this previous request by asking that religious institutions be exempted from municipal and divisional council rates on all immovable church property in Langa.[146] Thus, unlike its broader counterpart, the IDAMASA Federation, which was taking the political situation seriously by convening multi-racial conferences on matters such as "Human Relations in a Multi-Racial Society" during the 1950s,[147] the local CPIDAMASA remained parochial and insular in its focus.

Langa ministers made another rare appearance in the socio-political arena in April 1954 at a conference convened by the Cape Western Regional Committee of the SAIRR, geared towards pressurising the Minister of Native Affairs on housing issues related to the Coloured Labour Preference Policy. This time the clergy formed a loose grouping from the Presbyterian Church, the Salvation Army, the Anglican Church, the Congregational Union, the Methodist Church and the Society of St. John the Evangelist.[148] The ecclesiastical influence again proved inhibiting, in that the local clergy spoke only about the circumstances of married residents in Langa, despite the context of a much wider housing crisis. Rather than include the grievances of migrant workers who were being forcibly moved into Langa and placed in crowded hostel accommodation for "bachelor" males without their families, ministers sought only to highlight the evils of the envisaged removal of married Langa residents to Nyanga, which was to be developed for housing families alone. To this end, as a keynote speaker, Rev. Lediga argued that African families "were not animals in a zoo who could be lifted and placed somewhere else with no consideration of their feelings". He further lamented the lack of churches and other facilities in Nyanga, which had yet

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[146]AWC 3/5 79, Ndzotyana to Manager of Native Affairs, 27 August 1958; ibid., Manager of Native Administration to church organisations, 3 July 1961.

[147]Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, p. 100.

[148]3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/19, minutes of the NAC, 20 May 1954, pp. 686, 767; Cape Times, 3 April 1954.

to be developed, compared with the established set of amenities in Langa.[149] On this basis, and partly in fear for the future of their very own churches in Langa given that residents from the married quarters comprised the leading church members, the grouping of ministers made a united stand against the proposed removals to Nyanga. Along with the SAIRR, they requested the Minister of Native Affairs to withdraw a veto of the Cape Town City Council's plans to extend housing schemes for African families in Langa. In this way, although articulating the causes of their primary constituency relatively effectively, the local clergy missed the opportunity to identify with "bachelor" needs, so that this rare corporate response remained fragmentary and sectional.

Once again, the one practical concern around which local churches did organise spiritedly and relatively effectively remained the liquor question. When in 1954, Rogers considered it opportune to revive the issue of municipal beerhalls in the context of the decline of Advisory Board opposition in the early 1950s,[150] the Langa religious community met the Council's proposals with firm disapproval. It did so on the basis of an alliance with widely-based organised opposition that included the local ANC branch, the Congress of Democrats, the Liberal Party, the LAB and LVA. Most Langa clergy chose to voice their dissent to the revisited plans for municipal beerhalls through the channels of the more representative and white-dominated SATA, which lodged its protest together with other Christian temperance bodies such as the Light of Home Temple, no. 21 and the Endeavour Temple, no. 5.[151] At this time, an important addition to the religious voice of protest came in the form of local black temperance bodies – the African Western Grand Temple (AWGT), the Usizo Lwa Bantu Temple (ULBT), no. 11 and the Victory Temple, no. 8

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[149] Cape Times, 3 April 1954.

[150] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/19, LAB minutes, 8 June 1954 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[151] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/19, minutes of the NAC, 20 May 1954 and 1 July 1954.

(IOTT) – which, for the first time on any issue, raised their objections with the NAC. The emergence of the AWGT and ULBT onto the political stage can mainly be attributed to the leading role of the banned ANC and CP activist, Johnson Ngwevela, who mobilised the two respective temperance bodies into action in his position as Grand Vigilance Secretary of the AWGT and Grand Superintendent of the ULBT. He helped to bring a critical perspective to the opposing arguments of these organisations. Thus, apart from the usual moralistic arguments in relation to the destructive effects of beerhalls on the health and character of Africans, the local black temperance bodies also advanced a more fundamental critique. Like the progressive viewpoints of a minority of clergy in the 1940s, they rejected the beerhall system on the grounds of it being alien to traditional drinking customs and rather advocated the system of home brewing as being in accordance with African customs and traditions. This again revealed the important shifts taking place within some Christian circles, hinting at the emergence of a more African theology, more sensitive to the reformulation of African culture. In addition, the AWGT was even cheeky enough to point out that administrative agitation in favour of beerhalls in 1947 had resulted in a serious disturbance of the peace, which the organisation blamed squarely on the authorities. Instead, it was argued that as Langa was one of the most law-abiding townships with an "enviable reputation", a low crime rate, an absence of gangsterism and hooliganism, and a high standard of temperance and sobriety, this "happy state of affairs" militated against CC interventions.[152]

In the face of widespread opposition that included the important voice of local clergy and black religious bodies, the Council was again forced to abandon its beerhalls plans by July 1954. However, the issue was soon resurrected again towards the end of 1956. The local authorities

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[152]Simons Papers, BCZA 92/14403, fieldworker notes, 8 April 1954; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/19, minutes of the NAC, 20 May 1954; Cape Times, 10 May 1954.

argued that the introduction of 13 000 "bachelors" into Langa over the past three years created an urgent necessity for a beerhall, considering that "single" men were not permitted by law to brew domestically. They suggested furthermore that the recent "riot" of November 1956, which had resulted in damage to council property, including the barracks' dining hall and trading stall, was the ultimate consequence of illicit domestic brewing and the illegal acquisition of "European" liquor.[153] For the first time in relation to the liquor question, local African ministers made their own objections through the CPIDAMASA to the CC under the chairmanship of Rev. Ndaliso. Following pressures from the CPIDAMASA, SATA and other social and political organisations, the CC was persuaded to hold a referendum to test local public opinion. Conscious of the united and impassioned opposition, Rogers, though, convinced the CC to suspend such plans and to abandon its proposals once more for fear of another "riot".[154]

Only once local resistance had been effectively crushed in the early 1960s, did the CC again revive the municipal liquor scheme. In 1961, therefore, the CC eventually came to organise the previously planned local referendum regarding the supply of municipal liquor, which resulted in a convincing defeat for the proposal, after local religious and political bodies again mobilised effective and wide-ranging opposition from amongst the Langa community. Yet, despite the obvious failure to win support, the Council proceeded with its plans to administer municipal liquor outlets in Langa without the consent of the community.[155] The Langa branch of the Independent Order of True Templars, under the leadership of Ngwevela and Rev. Ndzotyana, together with a range of liberal, religious and temperance organisations which included SATA,

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153 Cape Times, 10 December 1956.

154 Cape Times, 1 February 1957; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 303.

155 Cape Times, 26 August 1961, 1 September 1961, 20 October 1961 and 25 April 1962.

the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Methodist Church and the Methodist Women's Auxiliaries, contributed their outrage to the broader political opposition, but this time their protests were in vain.[156] Citing government threats to circumvent local authorities by establishing their own private liquor outlets in townships, the Council argued that controlled liquor schemes were inevitable and so, for its own benefit, sought to implement the municipalisation of liquor as quickly as possible to thwart government intervention. More correctly, though, it appears that central government intentions were to lift liquor restrictions, so that Africans might run their own liquor stores within a prescribed framework of state regulations. More as a counter to this threat of privatisation than direct government intervention, the Council was therefore motivated to secure the immediate establishment of its own municipal outlets.[157] Thus, despite defiant local and regional opposition from religious, temperance, socio-political and cultural organisations, the Council eventually succeeded in opening its own bar lounges, beerhalls and bottle stores in Langa between late 1965 and 1970.[158] So ended the Council's long struggle to establish municipal drinking facilities, although the victory proved to be transient as students destroyed the beerhalls in the 1976 uprisings.

It is important to recognise that the Council's repeated failure to establish beerhalls in Langa was uncommon in the history of the liquor question in South Africa, given the range of legal and financial resources the municipality had at its disposal.[159] The dissenting role of local black

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[156]Cape Times, 26 August 1961 and 12 June 1962.

[157]Torch, 15 August 1962; Cape Times, 12 June 1962.

[158]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 428; AWC 3/1 3, Mayor's Minute, September 1965 - August 1967, September 1967 - August 1968 and September 1968 - August 1969; Torch, 15 August 1962.

[159]Musemwa has made this point strongly in the article, "The Struggle for Survival", p. 3.

religious and temperance bodies, in alignment with the broad range of white and black religious, cultural and political organisations, certainly proved instrumental in effecting these delays. Notably, the resolve of the black temperance organisations, together with the strength of the white temperance movement which had a long history in the Cape,[160] proved remarkably influential in the debate. It makes one question what might have been achieved had such religious organisations actively campaigned with similar vigour and zeal, alongside civic and nationalist organisations on a wider variety of repressive socio-political issues. As it happened, apart from the liquor question, dissent from the local churches remained limited, and had little other direct impact in local community politics throughout the 1950s.

As with the negligible role of local churches and religious bodies, the political influence of conservative Christians in community affairs, as individuals, proved nominal in the 1950s, as their civic organisations became increasingly isolated and their continued representation on the Advisory Board completely rejected by political forces to the left. With many conservative clergy and Christians discontinuing their active participation in the affairs of community, civic and political organisations in Langa, the ideological influence of more conventional Christianity itself declined in the wider political forum. The continued political involvement of the remaining few ultra-conservatives mostly seemed to intensify growing political resistance from local black progressives, non-collaborationists and Africanists alike.

So far as the Christian conservatives and the long-standing council nominees on the LAB were concerned, Garcia Nongauza, P. Mondliwa and John Pama had lost virtually all legitimacy to ANC and communist-elected AB members by the early 1950s. By continuing to be characterised

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160J. Pearce, "The Origins of the Temperance Movement in Cape Town in the 1880s", (University of Cape Town, B.A. (Hons) thesis, 1985), p. 12.

by their anti-communist and deferential ideals of conservative Christian reformism, their interventions merely served to deepen the already serious cleavages between supporters of the elected members and themselves as council nominees. With their authority and influence waning, they became increasingly obstructive as they sought accommodation with, and backing from, the township officials. Desperate to overcome growing impotence, Nongauza argued for the increase of council nominees to the same number of elected members in 1950.[161] Following the continual adjournment of the Advisory Board by elected members in the late 1940s and early 1950s, with which the council nominees refused to associate themselves as they perceived it to be at the instigation of so-called "irresponsible members", nominated members in July 1951 also called for the establishment of a channel of communication outside of the non-functioning Board, which would be represented by council nominees alone.[162] Nongauza, Mondliwa and Pama even followed the well-worn Citashe strategy by questioning the legitimacy of the AB elections in 1951 and subsequently called for the resignation of "illegitimate" communist-elected members.[163] Such actions came to nothing, but did provoke the wrath of elected members, who slated the nominees for their subordination and subservience to the CC's interests and their continued commitment to the separatist Christian philosophy of Aggrey. In turn, they called for the abolition of council members.[164]

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[161] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/15, LAB minutes, 9 May 1950 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[162] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/15, LAB minutes, 18 July 1950, 14 December 1950 and 15 February 1951 (annexure to NAC minutes); ibid., minutes of the NAC, 5 July 1951.

[163] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/17, LAB minutes, 18 December 1951 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[164] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/14, minutes of the NAC, 10 June 1949; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/15, LAB minutes, 11 October 1949 (annexure to NAC minutes); ibid., minutes of the NAC, 15 February 1951.

Ironically, far from being abolished, the council nominees and other conservative Christian anti-communists shortly came to be the only members represented on the LAB from 1952 onwards, as progressives favoured a total boycott of the Board and handed in their resignations as elected members, in opposition to what they condemned as a "futile" and "meaningless" system. In response, conservatives quickly ensured their places on the Board made vacant by the boycotters.[165] Their rejuvenated representation on the LAB, however, did not mean increased popularity or authority, but rather brought quite the reverse effect. For in a local environment which increasingly advocated non-collaboration and methods of boycott, continued representation in organisations perceived to be "collaborationist", elicited outright rejection and contempt from a large body of Langa residents. Thus, although conservative Christians provided the leadership in the continuance of the LAB for the rest of the 1950s, their representation received little popular support as they worked closely with township authorities, divorced from the mainstream of local political resistance. As a result of conservative Christians being at the helm, the Board, in fact, went into decline from 1952 onwards and increasingly struggled to survive. Local responses to LAB elections for the rest of the decade were exceedingly poor. The critical debate of the 1940s abruptly ceased. Few motions were forwarded, so that the Board met infrequently and increasingly the LAB acted as a rubber stamp in acceptance of CC initiatives.[166] On the basis of religious loyalty to the Crown, conservative Christian members, for example, supported the Council's planned Coronation celebrations of 1953 to deflect general protests

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[165] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/17, minutes of the NAC, 6 March 1952; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/18, minutes of the NAC, 5 March 1953; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/19, minutes of the NAC, 4 February 1954; ibid., LAB minutes, 15 April 1954 (annexure to NAC minutes); 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/20, minutes of the NAC, 3 February 1955; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/21, minutes of the NAC, 5 July 1956.

[166] See, for example, 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/17, LAB minutes, 15 April 1952, 19 May 1952, 24 June 1952 and 11 August 1952 (annexure to NAC minutes); 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/18, LAB minutes, 11 December 1952 (annexure to NAC minutes); 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/19, minutes of the NAC, 15 April 1954; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/20, minutes of the NAC, 24 August 1954; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/21, LAB minutes, 2 August 1955 (annexure to NAC minutes).

against the event from the broadly-aligned and widely representative, progressive LVA.[167] This incited the hostility of the Vigilance Association against the conservative-dominated Board. Conservative Christian businessmen, represented on the Board, also began to use their position to secure marginal economic privileges for themselves. It was not uncommon for these businessmen to promote their own syndicates unfairly, to administer facilities like the "bachelor" dining hall and council-owned trading stalls in the 1950s.[168] With such conservative social, economic and religious interests dominating Board proceedings, Christian Board members made little impact in challenging the impoverished nature of living conditions in Langa, and instead galvanised NEUM, Africanist and United Front elements resolutely around the strategy of "non-collaboration", as these groups increasingly criticised the LAB for its collusion and self-interest. By 1960, this left conservative Christians on the LAB effectively isolated and marginalised within local community politics as the large majority of residents – both petty bourgeois and working class – rejected the AB system out of hand.

Having been sidelined from the mid-1940s, the "sweetheart" Vigilance Association, as a largely conservative Christian organisation, also continued to make little headway in local community affairs in the 1950s, and rather suffered similar derision and abuse as experienced by the conservative Advisory Board. With a depleted constituency and membership, the Association held few meetings and made only occasional public representations. Like the conservative LAB, it continued to pursue traditional Christian trusteeship and reformist principles as a self-confessed civic and "non-political" body, which aimed at accommodation and brokering approaches. For example, in one of its rare deputations to the township authorities in 1955, the Association simply

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[167] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/18, LAB minutes, 16 February 1953 and 11 March 1953 (annexure to NAC minutes).

[168] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/19, LAB minutes, 6 October 1953 (annexure to NAC minutes).

sought to "hear and understand" the nature of proposed passes and permits for women, and took the matter no further. Practical matters such as the improvement of sanitation, street lighting and public facilities, and moralistic questions related to juvenile delinquency, "loafers" and gamblers also became the narrow focus of the Association's attention in the 1950s.[169] Such moderate socio-political strategies incensed more progressive and radical black resistance organisations, which stepped up their campaign against Christian trusteeship and the ultra-conservative Vigilance Association. In particular, the collaborationist tendencies of the "sweetheart" Vigilance Association provoked scathing attacks from the growing group of youthful NEUM supporters in Langa. The VA's intention to co-operate with the local authorities in 1956 in returning Langa to its "enviable", law-abiding status, after several incidents of violence had occurred in the township in resistance to liquor searches and police raids on the flats, was especially derided for its "detestable" attempts at collusion.[170] Essentially, the VA had promised to report "undesirable" elements to the police. In line with its conservative Christian bias, the moderate association had identified "rowdy", "single" men, who were considered to be "not used to decent society", as the cause of the recent disturbances. In alignment with the conservative VA's offer of co-operation, the Reverends Xibenye, Mbizela and Lediga had also promised to assist the authorities in ridding Langa of these "wild" and "hooligan" elements. Although conceding that some merely needed "social welfare work", they were convinced that others "were only fit for harsh treatment and must be dealt with severely" by the township authorities. In agreement with his orthodox MRA principles, Lediga thus preferred not to hold the police responsible for the incidents, since, in his view, they were merely carrying out the law, and instead accepted that the blame lay with his own

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[169]AWC 3/72 44, A. Jack to Town Clerk, 10 February 1955; ibid., Vigilance Association interview with Sergeant Roelefse, 10 August 1955; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, Mafeje notes on LVA.

[170]Torch, 15 January 1957.

people.[171] The reportedly "pompous and dramatic" Mbizela had even gone further to agree that white policemen were beyond reproach, and that part of the blame lay with African police, who he considered were arrogant and inhuman in the treatment of their own people. In this regard, he requested Rogers and Captain Murray to "teach our policemen to be like yourselves".[172] Such deferential and collaborationist tendencies from the conservative ministers and Vigilance Association enraged local NEUM supporters, whose devastating attacks on the group of perceived "quislings" further weakened the fragile position of conservative Christians. In the face of scandalous exposure and sensationalised attacks, the conservative Vigilance Association virtually ceased to function by the late 1950s. By this time, most socially active, conservative Christians found themselves marginalised and steadily withdrew from participating in local community affairs.

By contrast, the Christian liberal commitments of the still popular and potent United Front remained influential to shape community politics powerfully, especially in the early 1950s, as progressive Christians continued to be at the forefront of the movement's leadership. Social Christian leaders such as Ngwevela, Ntshinga and Malangabi made certain that the multi-racial and broadly-aligned character of the 1940s United Front was maintained in the 1950s by linking the progressive ANC (now the dominant force in the United Front following the ban on communism in 1950) and LVA protests with other coloured, black and white liberal and church bodies as diverse as the Congress of Democrats, the Liberal Party, Black Sash, African Peoples' Organisation, National Council of Women, Anglican Mothers' Union, the Federation of South African Women (Fedsaw) and Society of Friends. Similar to their universalist and multi-racial

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[171] AWC 3/23 201, minutes of meeting with Rogers and the police, 5 December 1956.

[172] AWC 3/23 201, minutes of meeting with Rogers and the police, 5 December 1956.

mission approach of the 1940s, they also secured a close working relationship with prominent white liberals, Christians and communists, such as L. Rubin, D.B. Molteno, Senator W.G. Ballinger, Mrs. M. Ballinger, Dr. O. Woldheim, Brian Bunting, Sam Kahn, Fred Carneson and A.G. Long, to extend the weight of their dissenting voice.

By the 1950s, in line with the National ANC Executive's "Programme of Action", the local black United Front and Social Christian leadership was also increasingly influenced by the Youth League's new interlinked African and Christian religious-based ideology of African nationalism to support passive resistance, boycotts and civil disobedience more readily and spiritedly. Thus inspired, the progressives, Ngwevela and Stuurman, led the total boycott of the LAB by handing in their resignations in March 1952, after the NAC had consistently failed to respond positively to a thirty-one point memorandum of complaints.[173] At the time, Ngwevela and his fellow progressive elected Board members were particularly critical of the Advisory Board as being nothing more than "a toothless watchdog which can bark but cannot bite" and a "toy telephone" which perpetuated oppression.[174] Ngwevela followed this up by playing a critical role in co-ordination of the boycott of the Tercentenary Van Riebeeck celebrations and in organising the western Cape chapter of the Defiance Campaign in 1952. Mainly because of his position as President of the Cape Western Region of the ANC, he came to chair the Western Cape Co-ordinating Committee, which represented a range of white and black liberal and church bodies, with the task of mobilising support for the Defiance Campaign and engendering protest action against the Van Riebeeck celebrations. Partly as a result of his many liberal and religious connections and his commitment to principles of non-violent but confrontational resistance, he

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[173] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/17, minutes of the NAC, 6 March 1952.

[174] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/15, minutes of the NAC, 15 February 1951, p. 954.

was successful in securing a broad-base of organisational backing and organised well-attended mass demonstrations at the Grand Parade at regular intervals throughout 1952 and early in 1953.[175] As a leading speaker at one of these meetings in June 1952, he was arrested for breaking the ban on him in terms of the Suppression of Communism Act, which forbade him from addressing political meetings. This act of civil disobedience only served to increase his popularity as a Social Christian and United Front leader in the early 1950s, as he continued to be re-elected (although officially banned) as President of the Cape Regional Congress.[176]

Along with fellow local Social Christian leaders, Ngwevela ensured that the western Cape chapter of the Defiance Campaign was strongly nurtured and reinforced by religious enthusiasm to reflect a Christian fervour - encouraged by the National ANC Executive – which was critical to the relative success of non-violent resistance in the later 1940s. The National Congress Executive had carried over this socio-religious strategy into the 1950s by calling for National Days of Prayer and Mourning, which effectively also functioned as "stay-at-home" strikes reminiscent of Gandhi's *satyagraha* ideals. The local progressive Christian United Front leadership had duly mobilised in 1950 in support of a Day of Prayer planned for 26 June, to extend their mass following on the basis of unitary appeals to Christ as the champion of freedom. Again, taking the lead again from the National Executive, in which Albert Luthuli was especially influential in expressing a Christian interpretation of non-violent defiance of unjust laws, local leadership under Ngwevela found it natural to infuse the Defiance Campaign in the western Cape with a tenor of religious exuberance. With many ANC supporters in the Peninsula being either churchgoers or nominal Christians, as a result of which religious vibrancy tended to arise spontaneously at gatherings, it was left to Social

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[175] AWC 3/2 146, ANC documents, 18 March 1952 and 24 June 1952; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 280; Cape Times, 28 September 1951.

[176] Cape Times, 24 June 1952; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 294.

Christian leaders to direct this heightened mood of anticipation. In this context of instinctive religious zeal, prayer meetings were encouraged to deepen the commitment to solidarity and Christian defiance, and hymn-singing was fostered to enliven a spirit of hope and courage. Speakers like Ngwevela regularly stressed the link between non-violent resistance and Christian principles, with references at times to Luthuli's inspiring speech, "The Road to Freedom is via the Cross", to emphasise the importance of Christian self-sacrifice in the cause of liberation.[177] On this basis, churchgoers remained an important source of mass support, consistently targeted by progressive Christian leadership. Opportunities to gain the favour of churches were seldom missed and efforts at appeasement, when necessary, were not overlooked. Thus, when in December 1952, after a mass rally in Langa, "radical elements" reportedly "lost control" and made attempts to set fire not only to the Municipal Native Administration offices, but also to the Methodist, Dutch Reformed and Roman Catholic Churches in the township, the local progressive leadership was swift to express its strong regret to the local church community, in order to win back their confidence and trust. Whereas radicals identified churches as institutions of oppression and sought to destroy them, local United Front leaders condemned such ill-disciplined activities in the strongest possible terms, and expressed their special sympathies and solidarities to ministers and church members whose buildings had been damaged.[178] This promotion of healthy church relations, together with a positive spirit of religious enthusiasm, certainly contributed to the good attendance, optimism and liveliness of mass meetings held at Langa and at the Grand Parade throughout the period of the local Defiance Campaign.

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[177] 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/15, minutes of the NAC, 15 February 1951.

[178] Cape Times, 16 December 1952.

For the rest of the 1950s, the local Social Christian United Front leadership remained committed to such defiant forms and methods of inter-racial and religious-based resistance. This was evident in the way in which progressive Christians, under the tireless Ngwevela, mustered popular local support for the National Congress of the People Campaign of 1955, as well as for the National Women's Anti-Pass Campaign of the late 1950s. They continued to develop liaisons with a range of black and white liberal and church groups, especially in relation to the western Cape chapter of the Women's Anti-Pass Campaign. Against a local background of intensifying pass raids on both African men and women, the introduction of a female Registration Office in Langa early in 1955 and the disinclination of authorities to register growing numbers of "illegal" women, Ngwevela again proved instrumental in uniting the opposition from Congress and the Women's League with that of the Black Sash, Fedsaw, mainly white Cape Town church leaders, the National Council of Women, Society of Friends and the Anglican Mothers' Union, to provide a strong vanguard of protest. This guaranteed that the mass demonstrations and marches organised intermittently throughout the years 1955 to 1957 by the Women's Anti-Pass Committee were well attended and broadly representative.[179] Again, the organisers promoted a mood of religious defiance at these meetings, with representative Social Christians in particular basing their condemnation of the pass laws and migrant labour system on the corresponding damage to the religious sanctity and coherence of family life.[180]

Apart from their formative role in the National Congress initiatives, black progressive Christians in the United Front were also at the forefront of highlighting more specifically local issues in the 1950s by working closely through the local progressive ANC and LVA branches, and identifying with sympathetic liberal and Christian bodies such as the Congress of Democrats, CPCC and

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[179]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 364-371; Torch, 13 August 1957.

[180]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 366, 371.

Liberal Party. The protests they organised, framed within both Christian reformist principles, as well as Christian ideals of passive defiance, ranged from more formal deputations in relation to liquor searches, increased rentals and the municipalisation of liquor, to mass demonstrations in opposition to large-scale police arrests, the introduction of beerhalls and forced removals of "bachelors".[181] In this regard, as in the 1940s, progressive Christian leadership continued in their attempts to reflect the immediate concerns of both petty bourgeois and migrant working-class residents in Langa in the 1950s.

As in the 1940s, equally, the role of local progressive Christians in the United Front was conditioned by certain inherent class and socio-religious ambiguities within their ranks. Accordingly, they continued to curb to some degree a growing momentum towards more radicalisation. The repercussions of these influences, evident in the 1940s, would prove more severe in the 1950s. For a start, their Christian liberal commitment to the multi-racial and universalist nature of the United Front – although allowing for a broadly representative opposition to develop – still tended to dilute more radical and specifically black action and solidarity through equivocation amongst certain black and white liberal and church organisations within the alliance. Typically, opposition to the 1952 Van Riebeeck Tercentenary celebrations, for example, was to some degree weakened by ambivalent and vacillating viewpoints on the part of progressive Christians – both black and white – within the alliance. On one side, as an important opinion-maker in the United Front, Archbishop Clayton of the Church of the Province of South Africa, sowed confusion by encouraging "non-Europeans" to take part in the celebrations. His Christian reformism encouraged his principled stance against non-collaboration, which led him to

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[181] See, for example, Cape Times, 3 July 1953; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 276, 302, 332; AWC 3/45 213, notes on meetings and gatherings, 3 February 1957; Torch, 11 June 1957 and 18 November 1958.

argue that African opinion should fundamentally be voiced through representative bodies and public functions.[182] Under the influence of white Christian liberal associates such as Claytor, the Anglican layman and former President of the ANC (WP) region, Malangabi, further contributed to the lack of solidarity by similarly arguing in favour of participation in the celebrations, on the basis of wanting to "know about Van Riebeeck", despite acknowledgement of three centuries of oppression.[183] This view was echoed by the African Social Christian, Papu, who argued that the celebrations were an opportunity to "show the world the progress we have made; [and to indicate] that we are not baboons". In the end, black progressive opinion mostly rallied around Rev. Ndibongo's reply to Papu, when he argued, "the world knows we are not baboons, but will think we are baboons if we celebrate our own enslavement".[184] Nevertheless, such contradictory attitudes served to weaken the political stand of opposition to the Van Riebeeck celebrations.

In a similar way, the effectiveness of local versions of the Defiance Campaign, Congress of the People Campaign and Women's Anti-Pass Campaign was also blunted somewhat by the various ideological and personal contradictions within the local Social Christian leadership. The fact that some African Social Christians were still wary of mass action, along with many of their white liberal and church allies, limited their responses during these campaigns. This was especially evident during the Women's Anti-Pass Campaign, when a number of black progressive Christians, together with white groups such as the Anglican Mothers' Union, the Society of Friends and the Black Sash, shied away from more direct tactics of civil disobedience and

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[182] Torch, 30 October 1951.

[183] Torch, 9 October 1951.

[184] Torch, 9 October 1951 and 26 February 1952.

boycotts, preferring more conventional and reformist forms of protest.[185] In addition, continued support for the Native Representatives, Sam Kahn and Bunting, and for the 1952 Native Representatives' elections, from Ngwevela, Ntshinga and Malangabi, confirmed that their approach in the 1950s, although more assertive, did not break with past Christian protest culture.

Following on from the late 1940s, with the relatively cautious social and religious commitments of local progressive Christians still colouring United Front political responses, the NEUM in the 1950s was emboldened to advance its campaign in Langa largely against the Christian liberal ideology of the United Front, and its purported collaborationist and trusteeship weaknesses. From 1950, youthful anti-church NEUM supporters in Langa led increasing attacks on Congress Alliance initiatives, which steadily eroded the strength of the Alliance. The Sons – later Society – of Young Africa (Soya - the NEUM equivalent of the ANC's Youth League) was especially active in disrupting alliance meetings in Langa which gave a platform to white liberals. By means of intimidation, Soya, for example, repeatedly prevented Sam Kahn, the Native Representative for the western Cape, from addressing alliance meetings in the early 1950s which were organised by Ngwevela – patronisingly known as Kahn's "pet" by Soya youth.[186] Election candidates for the 1952 Native Representatives' elections, such as A.G. Long, who were given a platform at ANC rallies in Langa, were also refused a hearing as a result of the disorder and interference caused by Soya youth at these meetings.[187] The Society defended its actions on the grounds that the Congress Alliance had been corrupted by subordinating itself to the overarching influence of

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185 Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 372.

186 Torch, 21 February 1949, 19 February 1952, 24 June 1952 and 9 September 1952.

187 Torch, 19 August 1952. The Liberal Party also had its meetings in Langa broken up by "an unbroken bedlam of shouting and invection" from NEUM supporters. See, for example, Cape Times, 2 October 1953 and 3 October 1953.

white liberal and religious control. In its view, liberals and their organisations were not to be trusted since they, allegedly, continued to function under the guise of white Christian trusteeship. For similar reasons, local NEUM supporters stayed out of the Defiance Campaign and organised their own boycott of the Van Riebeeck celebrations in 1952.[188] According to NEUM conceptions, the passive resistance strategy of the Congress Alliance was simply "a reactionary form of collaboration", limited by the faint-heartedness and indecision of liberal and church bodies, and dominated by their paternalistic and Christian liberal ideologies.[189] The NEUM influence in Langa remained strong enough to weaken the hold of Christian liberalism on the United Front. Again, however, the movement failed to mobilise anti-church elements into a broad-based movement in Langa, and its actual membership remained relatively small. Nevertheless, its distinctive non-collaborationist and anti-Christian liberal political discourse did have an informative influence, not least on emerging Africanist groups.

Not only did the multi-racial, Christian liberal approach of the United Front infuse oppositional life into the NEUM, but it also triggered increasing attacks from an emerging Africanist wing within its own ranks. Partly inspired by the theoretical critique and the antagonistic action of NEUM elements in the early 1950s, and by developing a more rigorous Lembede-inspired African nationalism, local Africanists increasingly began voicing their criticisms, especially from the mid-1950s onwards. Like the NEUM leadership, their dominating personalities comprised many embittered former church members who rejected white Christian trusteeship, "collaborationism", "sham democracy" and "dummy institutions". They, too, had become alienated by regional Congress support for the system of Native Representatives in the early 1950s. Their disillusion

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[188]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 281.

[189]Torch, 18 March 1952.

was especially directed against the ultimate failure of the local versions of the Defiance Campaign and Women's Anti-Pass Campaign, which in their view, had been brought about by the local Congress's Christian liberal commitment to multi-racialism and co-operation. Like the NEUM, local Africanists believed that the connection of Congress with white liberal and church organisations during these campaigns had effectively tainted the organisation's image and limited its success. On this anti-Christian liberal basis, Africanists were able to mobilise a fair degree of support from more traditionally-orientated and semi-urbanised "bachelor" migrants, now being settled in Langa in their thousands by the mid-1950s. This labouring community readily identified with Africanists' rejection of western Christianity and with the appeal to traditional African religious resources and symbols. Partly due to religious factors, then, but also because of the worsening socio-economic and political situation in Langa where influx control measures and labour bureaux regulations were being applied with rigid precision, the new ideology spread rapidly amongst migrant workers to become a powerful force in the township by the end of the decade. In particular, the new Africanist political force in Langa had its roots in the ANC's New Flats branch, which became so bitterly critical of the regional Congress leadership that it was later expelled from the Western Cape Congress Regional Conference.[190] In spite of this setback, Africanism continued to flourish in Langa and could boast the additional existence of three separate Africanist branches by the end of the 1950s, to provide a serious challenge to the Christian liberal dictates of the regional Social Christian Congress leadership.

By the late 1950s, under pressure from both ultra-left NEUM boycottists and the Africanist wing within its own ranks, the Congress Alliance and its Christian liberal proponents found their authority seriously weakened. Although the campaigns earlier in the 1950s had generated widespread support, the multi-racial, Christian liberal approach of the United Front had ultimately

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[190]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 360.

failed to secure significant changes to government policy, so that both urbanised and migrant residents became disillusioned with similarly-based United Front protests by the end of the 1950s. Congress Alliance meetings came to be poorly attended as the protests lacked innovation and generally tended to focus on single-issue concerns. Much of the progressive Christian leadership resigned themselves to their impotence in the face of government forces of repression. In this way, for example, the National Day of Prayer and Mourning of April 1958, effectively a "stay-at-home" strike organised in protest against the Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act, proved to be a dismal failure for the ANC Alliance in Cape Town. Whilst the same form of religious-orientated Day of Prayer protest had fired local enthusiasm and imagination at the beginning of the 1950s, it had become ineffectual by the end of the decade.[191] Government and official suppression of Congress initiatives certainly contributed to this decline. For example, learning from previous "stay-at-homes", Rogers made sure of a significant police presence to combat intimidation and actively encouraged residents to proceed to work during the National Day of Prayer of 1958.[192] Rogers also repeatedly ensured that both the ANC and Congress-aligned Vigilance Association were refused permission to hold meetings in Langa towards the end of the 1950s. His actions were based on the newly-framed Natives Laws Amendment Act of 1957, which placed "insider" restrictions on freedom of assembly. ANC gatherings in Langa failed to adhere to this. It would appear that its meetings were attracting certain supporters from outside Langa, who were entering the township "illegally". In terms of the recent legislation, it was required that new permits be obtained by non-residents to visit Langa. The known failure of many to comply with these stipulations led to Rogers banning the

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[191] Cape Times, 15 April 1958; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 377, 380. The ANC protest meeting against the ban on gatherings in Langa in September 1959 also proved to be a failure. Residents were described as being more interested in sporting activities, than in Congress political initiatives at the time. See Golden City Post, 13 September 1959.

[192] AWC 3/2 146, Manager of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 22 April 1958.

meetings.[193] In line with the Sunday Observance Act, Rogers also banned the holding of political meetings on Sundays, mainly because he was aware that Congress leaders used the non-working day to mobilise support and that Saturday meetings were not as well attended due to the many business, domestic, labour, cultural and sporting commitments on that day. In public, though, Rogers shrewdly only made use of religious arguments, and cited the views of some local African clergy to explain the reasons for the ban. Thus, ostensibly on the basis of local ecclesiastical fears that political meetings led to a breach of the Sunday peace, Rogers effectively outlawed political meetings, as, in his words, "Sunday was the Sabbath, [which] the residents ought to observe".[194]

Although repression by authorities was an important factor, the ultimate failure of Christian liberalism within the Congress Alliance to address adequately the growing burdens of the local African community proved to be critical to its eventual demise. In a local context suggested to be more unsparing than anywhere else in South Africa by 1960,[195] the methods of Christian reformism failed especially to connect with the pressing grievances of the ever-growing proportion of "bachelor" migrants in the new flats, zones and barracks. These increasingly politicised men preferred to mobilise amongst themselves along more radical lines. With polarisation between the petty bourgeois elite and the semi-urbanised migrant workers at its most severe, the implementation of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy making life exceedingly insecure for Africans, employment opportunities in broader Cape Town being extremely scarce, and migrant labour controls being applied strictly, conditions were ripe by the late 1950s for the emergence of a new militant force in opposition to the moderation of the Christian liberal

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[193] Cape Times, 2 March 1957; Torch, 5 March 1957.

[194] AWC 3/2 146, Rogers to Station Commander, SAP, 22 December 1958; ibid., ANC to Town Clerk, 23 April 1959; AWC 3/45 213, District Commandant, SAP, to Rogers, 22 July 1957.

[195] Lodge has put forward this argument in "Insurrectionism in South Africa", p. 143.

schemes of the Congress Alliance. This would emerge in 1959, with the rise of the PAC and its distinctly Africanist ideological outlook, powerfully inspired by an inherently African theology and providing a basis for radical political responses.

The local PAC branch immediately flourished as soon as it was set up in the township. Reflecting the origins of the broader national PAC movement, the local branch emerged out of Africanist breakaways from the Congress Alliance to include the former New Flats ANC branch that had been expelled, as well as three additional Africanist Congress branches which eventually seceded to become part of the newly-constituted PAC in May 1959.[196] On this basis, the local PAC branch was founded on an already developing anti-Christian liberal, non-collaborationist and inherently African liberatory ideology, which had existing connections with semi-urbanised and rurally-orientated migrant workers located in the new flats, zones and barracks. An African theology motivated by traditional symbols, myths and cosmologies, with an emphatic rejection of white Christianity, proved critical to this new vision of African liberation that local leaders set about promoting. In the mobilisation of popular support during 1959 and early 1960, which centred on the Langa Flats, the increasingly anti-"white church" and militant leadership made use of explicitly theological terms and customary religious appeals to revitalise the traditional spirit of African nationalism. At lively meetings in Langa, speakers such as the youthful Philip Kgosana invoked the gods of Africa and ancestral spirits of Makoma, Hintsa, Mghayi and Nxele to contribute to a vibrant religious atmosphere and traditional enthusiasm, nurtured to attract a mass following.[197] The revival of the militant nineteenth-century prophet, Nxele, by the local leadership as a heroic religious figure of the African past (as already indicated) signalled a particularly

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[196]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", p. 378.

[197]Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, p. 203; Lodge, "Insurrectionism in South Africa", p. 151; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, p. 242.

important shift in the nature of local black nationalist struggle. Nxele represented a renunciation of western Christianity and a return to militant protest. He was the classic charismatic symbolic figure that provided an imminent solution to an immediate pressing situation of chronic proportions. By appealing to Nxele, local leaders fostered the millenarian belief that his character would provide the necessary power for the immediate expulsion of foreigners from South Africa. In this regard, some local PAC supporters came to believe that Nxele was imminently associated with their struggle and spiritually present at their gatherings.[198] As a corollary to the summoning of African gods and spirits, and also crucial to the mobilisation campaign, the leadership, in addition, gave a fiery edge to local meetings in Langa by rejecting western deities and slating the hypocrisy of "white" Christianity and its inherent paternalism and trusteeship. The fervent national PAC leader and Methodist preacher, Robert Sobukwe, who addressed some impassioned meetings in Langa early in 1960, was a particularly vehement critic of western ideology and strongly impressed upon followers the need for an inherently African theology, based on a combination of both Christian and African religious resources.[199] Significantly, this anti-Christian liberal rhetoric attracted, amongst others, a smaller group of Africanists to local PAC branches who were converting to the Muslim faith at the time, on the grounds that Islam was operating as a liberatory religious and political force by being associated with movements for independence in greater Africa.[200]

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[198]Hodgson, "Ntsikana: History and Symbol", pp. 443-445.

[199]Chidester, Religions of South Africa, p. 242; Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, p. 203.

[200]Gerhart, Black Power in South Africa, p.203; Cape Times, 11 April 1962. It would appear that from the early 1960s a small but increasingly significant number of Africans broke from the churches in the Peninsula to turn to Islam. From this time, it was reported that "many red fezzes" could be seen in the townships unlike previously. By 1978, over 250 Muslims were reported to be living in Langa with an established Langa Muslim Men's Association in existence. Their application for a mosque was turned down at the time, purportedly due to the non-availability of sites in the township. By 1993, there was still no mosque erected in Langa, although Islam was said to be gaining ground, especially with the return of political exiles. See Argus, 17 February 1978; interview with Mr. Wellington (conducted by G. Hartley), 30 March 1993.

On this basis, with the apocalyptic character of African theology playing a prominent role, the PAC planned for an anti-pass campaign to begin on 21 March 1960, to pre-empt a similar protest organised by Congress for 31 March. In contrast to the ANC's pass initiative, the campaign envisaged by the PAC went beyond a single-issue concern to form part of a larger programme which optimistically planned to bring an end to the apartheid system within three years, in accord with broader millenarian ideas. The anti-pass campaign was considered to be a critical first step to the broader dismantling of repressive governmental structures, as it sought to immobilise the legal system by encouraging supporters to demand their arrests *en masse* for not carrying pass books, to the point where the prison and legal authorities could no longer cope with the situation.[201] Inspired by the apocalyptic nature of the campaign and through the subsequent evocation of religious African heroes such as Nxele, the PAC in the Cape thus prepared for sudden and imminent liberation. Even conservative residents from the married quarters appear to have associated the local PAC's mobilisation for the anti-pass campaign with another equally apocalyptic figure, Nongqawuse. They were intrigued by the secrecy of PAC agents, who placed pamphlets under their doors late at night.[202] Powerfully informed by potent religious symbols of redemption and with a religious sense of eternal destiny, youthful PAC task groups intensified their preparations for the campaign and contributed to rising tensions in Langa early in 1960, by leading vengeance attacks on local African police, regarded as symbols of oppression for their summary inspections, arrests and raids for illicit liquor amongst "bachelor" men.[203]

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[201] Cape Times, 15 February 1960; AWC 3/23 201, Cape Times article on the Diemont Commission, undated.

[202] AWC 3/57 201, a resident to Mr. Rogers, 25 March 1960.

[203] Cape Times, 30 November 1959 and 4 January 1960; Argus, 2 January 1960.

When the PAC began its campaign on Sunday 29 March in Langa, for the next three weeks, the protest, somewhat suprisingly – given the decline of anti-pass protests initiated by the Congress Alliance in the late 1950s – received an overwhelmingly favourable response from a widely representative majority of Langa residents. Many writers have attributed this support to the critical socio-economic and political conditions in contemporary Langa, which made the grievances of both urbanised and migrant elements particularly pressing.[204] But this fails to explain why Congress initiatives did not receive the same promising backing by the late 1950s, and serves to highlight the crucial role of religious factors in the local PAC's mobilisation of a mass following. The traditional, religious and apocalyptic character of PAC ideology certainly connected with local Africans to fuel more drastic action in a context where regular methods of protest seemed futile. The appeal of millenarianism had a long history in traditional African, particularly Xhosa society, something which had by no means died away. Although model teachings like that of Nxele and Nongqawuse had lost influence with the Christianisation of Africans during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, pre-Christian ideas persisted, even amongst church supporters in Langa, as African cosmic paradigms remained dormant but intact, alongside assimilated western cosmologies.[205] Thus, in a context where regular needs seemed impossible to attain through the normal channels of a stable community, where Christian liberal methods of protest were in decline, and western Christianity under increasing attack, the PAC's appeal to traditional religion and apocalyptic resources was readily appropriated by a wide range of *amagoduka*, *ikhaba*, *ooMac* and *iibari* residents. Significantly, the only social group amongst which the local PAC branch failed to gain an extensive following was the conservative

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[204]See, for example, Lodge, "Insurrectionism in South Africa", p. 143; Molapo, "Identity, Popular Culture and Politics in Langa", p. 54.

[205]Mafeje, "Religion, Class and Ideology in South Africa", p. 172; Hodgson, "Ntsikana: History and Symbol", pp. 444, 445.

Christian "decent" people, who continued to set themselves diametrically in opposition to traditional religion and African sources of heritage. These critics described the PAC's campaign as being "silly", with the intention of pushing the Langa community back "into the bush all the more".[206]

With their supporters relating favourably to traditional spirit and customary religious appeals, local PAC leadership ensured that the entire campaign was reinforced by religious enthusiasm, initiated and generated spontaneously "from below". Meetings at the New Flats were opened and closed in passionate prayer. In leading the famous march of 30 000 to the Cape Town police station, Kgosana repeatedly encouraged the crowd by calling upon the gods of Africa to watch over and sustain their endeavours.[207] Details of the proceedings of African resistance and its repression have been well documented, although the influence of religious factors has not always been clearly highlighted.[208] It would appear, for example, that the subsequent insurrection within, and destabilisation of, Langa over the next week, which involved looting, public lawlessness, the burning of municipal offices and government buildings, public facilities and some churches,[209] was to some extent inspired by the PAC's appeal to Nxele's religious teachings. For Nxele fulfilled specifically cosmic needs by allowing Africans to act in a way contrary to established values of interrelatedness and harmony, given a desperate situation. The fact that the targets of the arsonists were institutions of the moderate African Christian elite and official authorities, also

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206Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, notes on the Langa uprising; AWC, 3/23 201, untitled document, 25 March 1960.

207Argus, 28 March 1960; Torch, 22 March 1960; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, p. 242.

208Lodge, "Insurrectionism in South Africa", ch. 3; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 385-397.

209Argus, 22 March 1960; Cape Times, 8 June 1960; Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 5, notes on the Langa uprising.

accorded with Nxele's militant and theological renunciation of western Christianity and foreign authority. Following the brutal suppression of the Langa strike, religious visions and apocalyptic myths instigated by Africanists and PAC members, reportedly, continued to spread "like wildfire" in both Langa and neighbouring Nyanga to contribute to growing insecurity, occasional breaches of the peace and incidental acts of violence. In a context of considerable suffering after the uprising, which included the lengthy imprisonment of local Africans without trial, workers losing their jobs and being victimised by employers, and unemployed youth being forcibly railed off to the rural surrounds of East London,[210] two days of darkness were predicted, during which a hot wind would blow to release all prisoners and restore Langa and Nyanga ultimately to normality. Residents were advised to remain indoors and refrain from going to work. To indicate the weight that metaphysical premonitions carried by this time, it is interesting to note that many residents took the predictions seriously and stockpiled for two days. Even Anglican church-goers were effected by the prophesy. Two female Anglican communicants requested the local minister to bless their candles for fear that they would not burn on the days of forecasted darkness.[211]

Following the repression of resistance towards the end of March 1960 under a national state of emergency, and the banning of the PAC and ANC with the passing of the Unlawful Organisations Act, suppressed parties were forced to shift towards strategies of violent resistance by forming military wings. Whereas the ANC's military wing, *Umkhonto we Sizwe* ("Spear of the Nation" – popularly known as MK), aimed to sabotage municipal and government installations and failed to make an early impact in the western Cape, the PAC's military offshoot, Poqo, turned to a policy of total violence and unmitigated terror in the early 1960s. In this, it achieved some chilling

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210 Argus, 19 September 1960; Cape Times, 20 September 1960 and 24 September 1960.

211 Argus, 4 July 1960.

success in the western Cape, centred on the organisation of underground networks in Langa. Poqo ideology in the western Cape was also shaped by potent religious symbols of redemption, which contributed to its local effectiveness in conditions where apocalyptic myths continued to run rife and to maintain their influence. Unlike the MK approach to violence, which continued to be framed within the ANC tradition of addressing protest to the government, Poqo promised imminent, apocalyptic salvation at local, national and cosmic level, which connected particularly with the dire circumstances of semi-urbanised and rurally-orientated "bachelor" migrant workers.

Essentially, Poqo has been described as a militant religious and political movement, similar to the so-called "primary resistance", "millenarian" and "revitalisation" movements of other colonial situations which, drawing from traditional religion, worked towards an apocalyptic overthrow of colonial domination. In the local western Cape context, local leaders drew especially upon African religious resources in which symbols such as Nxele featured prominently, to guarantee Africans ultimate freedom. A strategy of total violence, advocated in the western Cape and engendered by apocalyptic innovations to African theology, was basically divided into four categories. These included so-called "defensive" murders of suspected informers and policemen, insurgent killings of whites, assassinations of Transkeian chiefs and their supporters, and effective preparations for a general uprising. Armed with these potent religious and militant ideals, Poqo leaders proved reasonably effective during 1962 in developing a network of underground insurrectionary cells, based in Langa's "bachelor" quarters and organised along "homeboy" lines.[212] This was despite some sporadic clashes in the Langa hostels and flats, brought about by a forcible recruitment campaign and alleged threats of intimidation on the part of some Poqo

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[212] Cape Times, 15 December 1962 and 6 December 1962.

members.[213] By this time, though, Poqo cells in Langa were sufficiently stable and organised to launch violent local attacks.

Crucial to the preparation of militant acts of rebellion was the introduction of quasi-religious and ritualistic ceremonies, during which Poqo members invoked the protection of the ancestors and gods of Africa. Religious war doctoring for invulnerability to bullets became a common undertaking at ceremonial initiations in Langa. Members were required to consume medicines, reportedly originating in Nigeria, and undergo the ritual of having marks made on their foreheads to make them immune from bullets in their clashes with so-called "forces of darkness".[214] With these religious safeguards, Poqo activists led a number of physical assaults on local African policemen and informants during 1962 in Langa.[215] Attempts were also made to burn the home of C. Ndavaba, who was considered to be a traitor, for accommodating the visit of representatives of the Transkeian Chief Minister, Matanzima.[216] Despite these violent incidents, no mass Poqo insurrection materialised in Langa as local and central authorities soon embarked on a campaign which would effectively smash Poqo organisational structures in the western Cape. Numerous raids were subsequently made on the Langa hostels and flats, which resulted in many arrests.[217] Revealingly, local authorities received the assistance of some clergy towards quelling the activities of violent Poqo elements. Rev. Matyumza of the Bantu Presbyterian Church, for example, acted as an informant by handing over names to township officials of individuals

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213 Cape Times, 2 May 1962; Argus, 2 May 1962.

214 Hodgson, "Ntsikana: History and Symbol", p. 443; Chidester, Religions of South Africa, p. 244.

215 Cape Times, 15 December 1962 and 5 May 1962; AWC 3/23 201, Worral to Town Clerk, 16 March 1962.

216 AWC 3/23 201, Rogers to Town Clerk, 15 October 1962.

217 Cape Times, 5 May 1962, December 1962 and 7 March 1961.

organising the rebellion.[218] Local authorities also had their actions reinforced by religious groups such as the white-inspired Gospel Fellowship Union, which began an "anti-terrorist" and pro-apartheid Christian campaign in Langa during the early 1960s which had the blessing of township officials.[219] By 1965, the authorities had effectively crushed local networks of Poqo underground cells, and had extinguished with it the apocryphal expectations and religious optimism of a new communal African order. From this time onwards, local militant resistance came to an abrupt halt, which, together with the outlawing of the PAC and ANC, created a political vacuum in the Langa context that would soon be filled by conservative Christian elements.

Although suffering virtually complete marginalisation by 1960, conservative Christians proved persistent in an environment which favoured co-operation with the apartheid state. Whilst they had been intimidated from standing for the Advisory Board in the light of militant local resistance from 1960 to 1964, once the nationalist movements had been crushed they again offered their services. With Rogers and the now Bantu Affairs Committee having targeted conservative shopkeepers and clergy to form the nucleus of a re-established Advisory Board, a meeting of self-confessed "prominent" Langa residents took place midway in 1964, at which time a compliant Advisory Board was elected for the year 1965.[220] Nominations were only received from the married quarters, with no representation from the barracks or special quarters. Advisory Board members included elderly conservative Christians such as Rev. J. Xibenye, P. Mondliwa and J. Fuku.[221] For the rest of the 1960s, AB items reflected conservative Christian and even

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[218]AWC 3/5 79, document by Matyumza, undated.

[219]AWC 3/23 201, Gospel Fellowship Union pamphlet, undated.

[220]Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 425, 439.

[221]AWC 3/40 156, LAB minutes, 17 October 1968; AWC 3/41 157, LAB correspondence, 19 April 1968.

segregationist interests. Xibenye introduced a new development into Board proceedings by opening and closing meetings in prayers of conciliation with and loyalty to the ruling authorities. With intentions to maintain their class distinctions and as a result of their Christian concern for the sacredness of the family unit, Board members sympathetically considered proposals to fence off the feared zones as a proclaimed area to prevent women entering them, in the belief that this threatened the community of family units. On the same basis, the Board was concerned about children housed at the zones, to the neglect of "bachelor" workers' interests and their harsh living conditions. The advocacy of segregation in the late 1960s was shown in Rev. Xibenye's promotion of the Group Areas Act as giving Africans a chance to manage their own affairs, in general AB support for the Cape Town visit of Chief Minister Matanzima, and in the Board's commendations of the authorities for the practical implementation of the Bantustan system after a government-sponsored tour to the Transkei and Ciskei.[222] During the 1960s, conservative Christians also brought about the revival of moderate, church-supported socio-political functions. In 1966, both the local clergy and ultra-conservative Advisory Board made certain that churchgoers gave their support to the government-sponsored Republic Festival held for Africans in Langa. As a result, a fair number of church members from around the Peninsula attended the Festival, with local ministers, the LAB, the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and choral societies being leading participants in the programme.[223] Christian conservatives also organised an international Moral Rearmament Conference in Langa with speakers from afar afield as England, Germany, France, the United States of America, Rhodesia, Holland and Switzerland. The meeting attracted about 600 delegates – many of them *ooscuse-me* Christians from the Cape – and strongly

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222AWC 3/40 156, LAB minutes, 17 October 1968; AWC 3/41 157, LAB correspondence, 22 June 1967 and 24 April 1970; Kinkead-Weekes, "Africans in Cape Town, 1936-1973", pp. 439, 441.

223AWC 3/55 306, programme, 1966; ibid., Acting Director of Bantu Administration to Town Clerk, undated.

advocated the four absolute moral standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love as being critical to the transformation of South Africa and the global community.[224]

Despite the reappearance of conservative Christians on the local political stage, their interventions were on the whole hardly influential or compelling. The reconstitution of the AB and the continuance of conservative functions received little popular legitimacy, and functioned with minimal accepted authority. Certainly, the majority of residents had long rejected Christian gradualist and unequal forms of accommodation by this time. Although the draconian restrictions of the apartheid state had enforced a period of quiescence, the shifts towards new socio-religious symbols, methods and strategies for socio-economic and political freedom had been established beyond recall. In particular, the basis had been laid for a shift in the relationship between religion and politics. Whereas political protest had previously conformed to non-violent and reformist Christian appeals, after experience of the uprisings and unrest and subsequent repression of the 1960s, religious principles would increasingly be tailored to changed socio-economic and political realities, which would demand the application of radical action on the lines of more confrontational religious symbols and distinctly African theologies. In this context, protests by means of Christian moral appeals would become increasingly scarce, unpopular and ineffectual.[225]

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[224] Cape Times, 26 March 1962.

[225] Argus, 18 January 1977 and 9 February 1977; interview with Father Harris (conducted by G. Hartley), 1 April 1993; interview with Rev. Kokoali (conducted by G. Hartley), 1 April 1993.

CONCLUSION

Clearly, mission Christianity had a marked effect upon the historical development of Langa during the period ca.1927-1960. Its critical role in its fundamental transition, whereby the community was transformed from a relatively peaceful, conforming and unitary area to a place of militant resistance, violence and upheaval cannot be underestimated. For, in its variety of forms, the Christian religion contributed decisively and in contradictory ways to processes of social integration, solidarity and legitimation in the township, as well as to patterns of social liberation, dislocation and differentiation. These strongly shaped the contours of Langa's history in the inter-war and early apartheid years.

Especially in the late 1920s, 1930s and early 1940s, it has been argued that a combination of conservative and liberal modes of mission Christianity, amongst other social factors, functioned primarily to define a strikingly conservative, integrated and petty bourgeois-orientated township. The strength and influence of the respectable churches, which included a close alignment of mainly mission and Ethiopian-type religious institutions, proved crucial in this regard. Their early reliance on evangelicalism and moralism, and accommodation to the racial and class relations of an industrialising South Africa, served to subject the large element of churchgoers in Langa to moderate, civilised and "non-political" values. With these moralistic and religious tenets reinforced through the mission schools, civic organisations and cultural forms of association, mission *yokwenyani* ideology even came to impinge on the wider non-churchgoing community. To this end, *yokwenyani* church involvement was again vital in framing the respectable context of early education, leisure occupations and cultural events in Langa. In this way, churches in Langa were remarkably effective in permeating the character of the township with their gradualist and class-based principles of mission ideology. Even into the 1950s, contemporary residents would comment that Langa was still "wholly pervaded with Christianity"

as a result of the churches' efforts. Whereas churches in other townships, particularly on the Rand, were identified as to "scarcely touch the community life in general", Langa churches were often singled out for creating a predominantly peaceful, Christian and uniform atmosphere in the township.[1] Certainly, in urban locations on the Witwatersrand and in the eastern Cape, mission churches failed to achieve the degree of influence and to maintain it for the length of time that Langa "native" missions were able to exercise. The fact that elsewhere close relationships were difficult to establish between the Ethiopian and mission churches, that the challenge from Zionist and influential "charismatic" AIC churches was more intense, together with a situation where there were fewer petty bourgeois and "school" migrant working elements from which to draw, limited the extent to which urban mission churches on the Rand could prove influential.[2]

This thesis has maintained that the backing and assistance from respective governments, the Cape Town City Council and township authorities made it possible for the respectable churches, in particular, to wield such leverage. In the very formation of churches, schools and forms of recreation, the official authorities favoured the establishment of *yokwenyani* and mission-orientated institutions. With overlapping Christian ideals of progress, civilisation and decency, they promoted mission activities and supported mission authorities both overtly and less directly. This relationship suited the municipal authorities who sought to spend only minimally on the development of social facilities in Langa, as well as the ecclesiastical leaders who saw this as an opportunity to extend their Social Gospel programmes. Thus, with official approval and in the absence of municipal and state secular undertakings, the climate was conducive for the objectives of *yokwenyani* churches to flourish. Again, social commentators as late as the 1950s noted that public amenities in Langa were so limited that it enabled the churches to be depended

[1]See, for example, Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, interview with Mr. Pasha, 21 February 1956, p. 439.

[2]See Sundkler, Bantu Prophets, pp. 60, 87; Pauw, Christianity and Xhosa Tradition, pp. 32, 33; Wilson and Mafeje, Langa, pp. 18, 54.

upon as central for their socio-cultural interventions.[3] This contrasted with other major urban centres in South Africa, where official facilities were relatively better provided for by local city councils and where mission churches did not receive the same degree of municipal promotion and protection.[4]

Accordingly, it has been contended that respectable churches initially commanded respect from a wide range of churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike. That they were able to meet the needs and interests of the influential educated petty bourgeois element, which came to provide primary laical and ecclesiastical church leadership, allowed for mission ideology to be carried widely into the community. With these church members being most predisposed towards the Social Gospel, together with being the most securely placed in positions of privilege and authority in township structures, their role in the spread of Social Christian traditions proved vital and instrumental. Given their long-standing prominence and entrenched urbanised living experience in the Peninsula since the early 1900s, enhanced by well-developed relations with white authorities, ministers and liberals in Cape Town, their early appropriations of predominantly "white" religious resources tended not to be unduly creative or radical. In this way, they contributed profoundly to the early propagation of a largely white-orientated, socio-religious ideology through churches, schools, cultural associations, civic and even political organisations. By setting parameters in which the deferential effects of Social Christianity would become pervasive, they came to incorporate in particular aspiring semi-urbanised and migrant "school" workers into their programmes, and even to shape the milieu to which the responses of non-churchgoing *amaqaba*, *iibari*, *ooMac* and *ikhaba* elements would be subordinated. This differed

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[3]See, for example, Wilson Papers, BC 880, A1, box 2, interview with Mr. Pasha, 21 February 1956, p. 439.

[4]See AWC 3/5 93, untitled documents, 17 September 1945 and 20 September 1945; 3/CT 1/4/10/1/1/6, minutes of the NAC, 21 November 1932, 16 February 1933 and 3 April 1933, pp. 145, 194; AWC 3/15 106, untitled documents, 28 November 1938, 8 December 1938 and 7 January 1938.

markedly with the experience of other urban townships, where numerous marginalised and newly-proletarianised segments were able to assume leading positions in their own AICs, often orientated in opposition to petty bourgeois respectable and mission church memberships.[5]

Apart from its mainly conservative and integrative functions in the late 1920s, 1930s and early 1940s, the inherent inconsistencies within the combination of conservative and progressive forms of Christianity also engendered early divisive effects within the wider Langa community. Although these patterns of social division and class differentiation were perhaps less obvious at this time, they laid the foundations for severe polarisation in Langa by the late 1950s. Already by the 1930s, the range of overtly Christian and petty bourgeois-orientated church, educational and cultural events operated to set traditionalist migrant workers apart from the Christian petty bourgeoisie and "school" migrant element. Moralism, the ideal of character, appeals to the British Crown and white sympathisers, as perpetuated in Christian-based religious, cultural and educational institutions, remained foreign conventions to rurally-orientated poorer workers, who were ostracised from a modernising, respectable and civilised township culture. Not only were divisions induced between Christians and traditionalists, but even amongst the influential petty bourgeois element and church adherents themselves. The parochialism, denominationalism, anti-communism and even ethnic loyalties encouraged by conventional mission ideology served to differentiate a more staunchly conservative Christian petty bourgeoisie from a progressive Christian and non-Christian petty bourgeois segment, which challenged these inclinations. There was evidence, too, that some individual Christians were disowned by ecclesiastical *yokwenyani* leadership for appropriating anti-white, anti-British and distinctly African interpretations of Christianity which undermined mission norms.

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[5]See, for example, Baines, " 'In the World but not of it' ", p. 111.

At the same time, rather than just shape the outlines of a moderate and acquiescent township, the liberal strands of the Social Gospel, in particular, also contributed towards the early framing of a dissenting voice of protest which, although not extreme, provided a channel for spirited defiance. Especially more progressive elite Social Christians, who were not confined by a narrow Christian philosophy of society, came to draw on Christian liberal resources to lead a lively movement of resistance through civic organisations and later the local branches of the NLL, CP and ANC. The reaffirmation of "positive" features of African traditions, as engendered by progressive influences of Social Christianity, through churches, schools and cultural celebrations, further provided a basis for a more critical articulation of community protest towards the 1940s. For, with the loose framework of an inherently African theology beginning to emerge, progressive Social Christians in Langa started to challenge western conceptions by summoning up African customs and explanations. This interpretation of the ambiguous role of Social Christians conforms quite closely to Elphick's latest broad analysis of "Missionaries and South African Christians in the Age of Segregation", which goes beyond Cochrane's identification of them as "Servants of Power", to appreciate their catalytic part in the inspiration of a vital "dissenting tradition".[6]

By the late 1940s and into the 1950s, the study has suggested that these diverse influences of the Social Gospel brought about crucial effects in the township, in combination with other socio-cultural and political factors and changing historical circumstances. Firstly, the continued hold of key church, cultural and educational positions by the increasingly conservative religious elite, effectively provoked more radical, even militant and antithetical, socio-religious and political

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[6]See Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel", pp. 368, 369; Cochrane, Servants of Power. Notice the point Elphick makes that he and Cochrane differ partly because of Cochrane's focus on the churches, compared to his primary concentration on the missions. This distinct focus of attention partially accounts for the discrepancy between Cochrane's conclusions and that of the present study. See also A.G. Cobley, Class and Consciousness: The Black Petty Bourgeoisie in South Africa, 1924 to 1950, (New York, Connecticut and London, Greenwood Press, 1990), ch. 3, for a more balanced interpretation.

responses. Clearly, in an increasingly discriminatory and hardening political context, enduring attempts to defend the staunchly Christian and moderate tenor of the township in collusion with police and township authorities, induced a wide range of opposition from the progressive petty bourgeoisie to more militant Africanist and radical NEUM elements. Once the petty feuding, religious hypocrisy and small-mindedness of this conservative Christian elite was exposed, even churchgoing "school" migrants and progressive Christians were pushed into alignment with more radical positions which questioned the collaborationist and legitimating functions of overtly Christian institutions. Perhaps, though, the most important consequence of conservative Christian responses related to the alienation of "bachelor" migrants who were forcibly moved into Langa under the CLP Policy by the mid-1950s. The tendency to view and subdue the growing influence of this independent working-class subculture as "heathen", "undesirable" and even "illegal", fundamentally served to polarise the township. By dismissing radical working-class concerns and traditionalist socio-religious resources, conservative elite Christians antagonised semi-urbanised and rural workers, propelling many of them into extremist camps. As a consequence, even progressive petty bourgeois Christians, who had led defiant campaigns of confrontational protest in the 1940s and 1950s, were shunned for their non-violent, Christian liberal and multi-racial United Front commitments, as more militant and inherently African socio-religious and political symbols were appropriated. Despite having opened up a loose African-based theological and political approach, this progressive lead remained bounded by liberal definitions of peaceful response, with radicals pursuing more potent traditional representations.

With conservative Christians and their institutions virtually completely marginalised by 1960, and with progressive Christians and their liberal methods of protest in decline, the climate was ripe for more assertive Africanist, socio-cultural and religious resources to spread widely in Langa. Consequently, mission Christianity in Langa in both conservative and progressive forms,

ultimately failed to provide the necessary resources to allow local Africans to confront the existential dilemmas of their dehumanising living experiences effectively. Although the progressive strands of the Social Gospel paved the way for a more African-orientated and challenging position, the predominantly conservative influence of mission ideology ultimately contributed towards maintaining the status quo in Langa. Only once purged of its paternalism and elitism, and having developed a more "prophetic" orientation, would Social Christianity inspire a more dynamic force of resistance in the township towards the 1970s and 1980s.[7] For all this, even by the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, a number of leading Christians and churches in Langa still continued to promote a complete separation between religion and politics. They advocated obedience and submission to the laws of the land and refused to masquerade as "stooges of communistic ideology" like some clerics whom they identified to have defiled themselves by adopting a position considered to be inherently "anti-South African". Equally, these conservative Christians were criticised for advocating a gospel that remained "white-orientated" and abused for not "politicising" the people.[8] At the same time, it should be recognised that such tensions were partly motivated by the intimidatory tactics of the Special Branch in the 1980s which reportedly threatened church ministers and adherents with "imprisonment on Robben Island" should they "dabble in politics".[9]

To the present, the early influences of mission Christianity and the Social Gospel continue to be prevalent in Langa. Accordingly, the Social Gospel in Langa has not led to a complete secularisation of social forces, as some critics abroad have contended about the wider role of

[7]Interview with Rev. Andile (conducted by G. Hartley), 30 March 1993; interview with Rev. Kokoali (conducted by G. Hartley), 1 April 1993; interview with Father Harris (conducted by G. Hartley), 1 April 1993; The Argus, 18 January 1977 and 9 February 1977.

[8]Interview with Captain Masala (conducted by G. Hartley), 30 March 1993; interview with Rev. Madlala (conducted by G. Hartley), 29 March 1993; The Argus, 30 November 1976; AWC 3/25 99, Rev. H.F. Nel to Chief Director, Bantu Affairs Administration Board, 2 March 1977.

[9]Interview with Rev. Madlala (conducted by G. Hartley), 29 March 1993.

Social Christianity. Instead, Christianity remains a vital force in shaping the outlook of Langa. The Methodist, Anglican, Roman Catholic and Reformed Presbyterian (previously the Bantu Presbyterian) denominations still serve as the dominant religious institutions in the township and continue to be viewed by the many adherents, mainly women, as the "churches with status".[10] Other religious traditions, such as ancestral African religion, Zionism, Rastafarianism and Islam, have also increasingly stamped their impression, so that a strong religious pluralism presently exists in Langa. These traditions, nevertheless, still lack buildings and the resources that mainline Christian churches have in their possession. For these reasons, they still do not command the same degree of influence as the conventional churches and, for the most part, function separately from the Christian institutions.[11] At the same time, the Social Gospel in Langa has not resulted in the establishment of the Kingdom of God, which corresponds with Elphick's conclusions about the Social Gospel and its degree of ascendancy in broader South Africa.[12] But it does continue to frame local socio-political responses, still in diverse and contradictory ways. On the one hand there are those churchgoers who still refuse to serve two kings and will not even wear shirts with political slogans. They prefer to preach the dualistic message of Christian reconciliation between God and humankind.[13] On the other hand, there are those Christians whose grassroots activism is fundamentally inspired by the early dissenting Christian tradition, and the developing "prophetic" voice of the 1970s and 1980s. A number of Langa ministers are at the forefront of this approach. Their sermons provide a complex amalgam of religious and political concerns. In addition, they have been instrumental in marshalling the

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[10]Interview with Father Harris (conducted by G. Hartley), 1 April 1993; interview with Rev. Madlala (conducted by G. Hartley), 29 March 1993.

[11]Interview with Rev. Andile (conducted by G. Hartley), 30 March 1993; interview with Rev. Ntshudu (conducted by G. Hartley), 30 March 1993; interview with Mr. Wellington (conducted by G. Hartley), 30 March 1993; Cape Times, 20 December 1999.

[12]Elphick, "The Benevolent Empire and the Social Gospel" p. 369.

[13]Interview with Captain Masala (conducted by G. Hartley), 30 March 1993; interview with Rev. Madlala

agenda of the local and regional Interdenominational African Ministers' Associations, towards local issues of housing, rent and evictions in alignment with civic and political organisations.[14]

To be sure, the impact of mission Christianity and the Social Gospel in Langa cannot be understated as their contradictory and pervasive influences remain integral to the historical development of a range of local social, cultural and political processes to the present. An understanding of the role of Christianity as a vital township force certainly enhances conceptions of modern-day Langa. Accordingly, it is hoped that this study might have contributed towards illustrating some of the cultural, religious and ideological elements, which have been critical to the shaping of urban African communities in the twentieth century. For clearly, Christianity has deeply affected the livelihoods and destinies of many Africans in urban centres. It is hoped that this attempt at the historical recovery of one part of that formative role might contribute to the reconsideration and re-evaluation of the many functions, failures and accomplishments of the Christian influence in black township history.

(conducted by G. Hartley), 29 March 1993.

[14]Interview with Rev. Kokoali (conducted by G. Hartley), 1 April 1993; interview with Rev. Andile (conducted by G. Hartley), 30 March 1993.

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